

CONTENTS

VARIA :

Retrospect—The Bookshop—Why trouble about the Theatre?—The Origin of
Futurism—Futurism and Ourselves—Notes and Announcements.

PAGE

386

POETRY :

Robert Bridges	395
Thomas Hardy	395
Walter De la Mare	396
Francis Macnamara	398
Rupert Brooke	402
Robert Frost	406
John Alford	416
Douglas Goldring	418
E. N. da C. Andrade	418
E. Buxton Shanks	419
W. H. Davies	421
Madeleine Caron Rock	422
Sherard Vines	426
Frances Cornford	428
Harold Monro	429

DRAMA :

Lord Dunsany	431
------------------------	-----

STUDIES AND APPRECIATIONS :

The Problem of the Repertory Theatre	<i>Basil Dean</i> 444
Francis Thompson	<i>J. C. Squire</i> 452

CHRONICLES :

Current English Poetry	<i>Dixon Scott</i> 459
Dramatic Chronicle	<i>Gilbert Cannan</i> 469
French Chronicle	<i>F. S. Flint</i> 473
American Poetry	<i>John Alford</i> 485

REVIEWS :

Oxford Poetry, 1910-1913: G.D.H.C., G.P.D., and W.S.V.—Cambridge Poets,
1900-1913: Aelfrida Tillyard—Collected Poems: Ford Madox Hueffer—
Auguries: Lawrence Binyon—Odes: Lawrence Binyon—The Shorter Poems
of Frederick Tennyson: Charles Tennyson—Aphrodite, and Other Poems:
John Helston—Poems: Willoughby Weaving—Jesus of Nazareth, a Poetical
Drama: Alexandra von Herden—The Tempers: William Carlos Williams—
Poems: Michael Heseltine—Bread and Circuses: Helen Parry Eden—Poems:
R. C. Phillimore—Carducci, a Selection of his Poems: G. L. Bickersteth—A
Book of Children's Verse: Mabel and Lilian Quiller-Couch—The Poetical
Works of William Drummond of Hawthornden: L. E. Kastner, M.A.

A LIST OF RECENT BOOKS [ANNOTATED] 508

VARIA

RETROSPECT

ABOUT two years ago—that is, in the last months of 1911—we were suddenly called upon to found a periodical devoted entirely to poetry. The queer adventure was irresistible ; and as there were only a few weeks to the first of January (all periodicals should date from the beginning of a new year), we set to work without a moment's delay. Yet not without a moment's hesitation. We confess that we had no idea what to do. The first week produced copious illegible notes and lists, estimates, dozens of vain addresses on blotting-paper and the backs of letters, and a prospectus. We worked almost alone ; in midnight hours those past failures, a long line, all saints or martyrs, stepped from their niches to taunt us. We hesitated until the printers insisted on action, then we rushed desperately into the catastrophe of a first number. We called it *The Poetry Review* : we were very dissatisfied with the name, but could think of no better one. It was on the whole kindly received, which was disconcerting. We quickly saw that something must be seriously wrong with it. The second and succeeding issues, however, produced a fair quantity of objections, which seemed promising. We are not the least ashamed of confessing our inexperience, even ineptitude. The selection of poetry for a periodical is one of the most difficult literary tasks imaginable. We served a long apprenticeship ; gradually *The Poetry Review* led up to something more ambitious ; now we come to you with this fourth number which closes the first volume of POETRY AND DRAMA, and, at last, O public, we stare you boldly in the eyes and challenge you not to overlook our existence. Next year we must double our circulation. Therefore we ask you :

1. TO CONTINUE EITHER TO SUBSCRIBE TO "POETRY AND DRAMA," OR TO PURCHASE IT REGULARLY AS IT APPEARS.
2. IF YOU INTEND TO SUBSCRIBE, TO SEND YOUR SUBSCRIPTION BEFORE JANUARY 31, 1914.
3. EACH SUBSCRIBER OR PURCHASER TO PERSUADE ONE FRIEND TO SUBSCRIBE OR PURCHASE IN ORDER TO DOUBLE OUR CIRCULATION.

These are only logical requests, which need no excuse or amplification.

THE BOOKSHOP

THE Poetry Bookshop will keep its first anniversary next January, and we now have no diffidence in prophesying its permanent continuation, provided it does not depart from its present happy vagabond way of existence and seek to become an *institution*. This danger was the principal one formulated by Mr Henry Newbolt in his inaugurating address last January. Yet we are in no fear.

Official societies for the collective enjoyment or propagation of poetry must always be failures. Here, we have simply a few people gathered together, and, since the English climate is bad, a house—otherwise a field or a beach might have done. We make a regular practice of reading poetry aloud, and any one who wishes to stroll in and listen may do so. The second time he comes to listen he is merely asked to buy a copy of this periodical, if he has not already got one. We are absolutely certain that the proper values of poetry can only be conveyed through its vocal interpretation by a sympathetic and qualified reader. Indeed so obvious does this appear that we regard the books on sale in the shop merely as printed scores for the convenience of refreshing the memory in hours of study or of indolence. We hope that few people who visit the shop will fail to test the matter, and judge if we are not right. The transplantation of poetry out of the common ways of life into the study is an abuse not to be tolerated. We refuse to consider poetry as pure literature : it is the supreme form of verbal expression, and, as such, is of no signification in the dusty shelves of libraries, of no specific value until brought out into the active ways of life. A critic in the *Nation* writes that “the eye is both a quicker and a nicer instrument of sense than the ear ; and now that poetry, without really losing its essential character as a thing heard, has simultaneously become a thing seen, it has been able to achieve subtleties, delicacies, and profundities which before were out of its reach.” This is true ; yet, side by side with those achievements, there should have developed an increase of aural apprehension. Every year humanity continues to use its ears less and to trust more to its eyes. At present there can be scarcely a hundred first-class readers of poetry in England, the demand for them having almost ceased. But we are on the way to altering all this. We hope that Poetry Bookshops will eventually be established in all the principal towns of England—not as institutions, but as houses of enjoyment.

WHY TROUBLE ABOUT THE THEATRE?

WHEN, taking this question for a text, Miss Horniman recently addressed the members of the Sesame Club, we hoped to hear something more illuminating than the commonplaces that the theatre is the home of the drama and that the drama is a form of art. We should have been pleased, for instance, to hear Miss Horniman controvert the argument of the gentleman who subsequently expressed the opinion that the stage was an excellent form of social pulpit. Perhaps she did not consider it worth the trouble, yet, in that case, considering the present prevalence of the propagandist drama, we cannot help thinking she was mistaken. Need we repeat here that propagandism is only excusable where it is obviously inherent in the plot of a drama, where it remains subservient to art? Though we praise the spirit of vitality which informs the propagandist movement in the drama, we deplore it in its utilitarian forms. The spirit of Miss Horniman's meeting was essentially utilitarian. Didactic drama is intolerable.

Now the point which is from time to time forgotten, but which is at the moment being splendidly forced upon us by Signor Marinetti, is that art is in the first place a result (a symptom if you will), and in the second a cause. It is only as a symptom of an ordered vitality and a secondary cause of its wide-spread dissemination that art is of value. Signor Marinetti might object to the coupling of the words "vitality" and "order," and we are perfectly prepared to admit that between vitality and an *imposed* order there must be open conflict. But we are confident, on the other hand, that he would agree that a vitality which is chaotic, which fails to produce *its own* order, which is not rhythmic, must be abortive or sterile. Art, then, may be considered as a means to the elimination of the unessential and a more general and intensified realisation of life. To no art is afforded greater opportunities than to the drama for bringing a condensed world into immediate contact with the senses. Such is the purpose of the intimateness which has so often been the special plea of our Dramatic Chronicler and of which he again treats in this number. This is no argument for a closer realism. Imagination is, after all, an amplification of the ideal world, and as real as experience. But it *is* an argument for a fuller life and a special plea for the drama as an unsurpassed method of communication between the interpreters of the essential world and a less-gifted public.

THE ORIGIN OF FUTURISM

IN the September number of POETRY AND DRAMA we made some attempt to explain the principles of Futurism. Since that date English people have had an opportunity of hearing them expounded by their originator, in person. Signor Marinetti was in England for a few days in the middle of November and spoke at the Poetry Bookshop, the Cabaret, the Poet's Club, Clifford's Inn Hall, the Doré Gallery, and at a private dinner arranged in his honour by some of his more enthusiastic supporters among the younger English painters. Several of these meetings were open to the public, and a good opportunity was therefore afforded it to acquaint itself with a movement which is claimed by its founder to be about to revolutionise not only the world of art but our whole actual mode of thought. On one point, at least, we have had our minds cleared. In its origin the Futurist movement was avowedly Italian and for the Italians, rather than cosmopolitan in its aim. Italy had become, first, by reason of its storehouses of medieval art, the museum, secondly, by reason of its natural beauties, the pleasure-garden of Europe. Its individuality, its Self, was dead, or being feebly warmed at the embers of a vitality four hundred years old. It was to the task of infusing new life into the Italian race that the Futurist leaders set themselves, and this they were convinced they could only do by refusing all connection with a past which had become a shackle round any immediate or future development. The forms—literary, artistic, and social—which the spirit of the Renaissance had built for its own housing had become the fetish of an age which was stifling its own spirit in their preservation. In order that that spirit might breathe and expand, the destruction of outworn forms was essential. The circumstances demanded violent action, and the pioneers went down into the streets to organise meetings for the voicing of their destructive principles. From this point has followed the creation and development of new literary and artistic forms designed to be the fit vehicles for the spirit of modernity as felt by themselves. The latest stage in this development was expressed in the manifesto on *Words at Liberty*, a translation of which appeared in our last issue. During his visit Signor Marinetti declaimed a number of his own poems in this new medium. We admire his extraordinary inventiveness; we were enthralled by his declamation; but we do not believe that his present compositions achieve anything more than an advanced form of verbal photography.

FUTURISM AND OURSELVES

WE have nothing but admiration for the courage of those men who, at great risk and in spite of all opposition, have blared the principles of their Futurism into the ears of their compatriots. Italy is, in the mind of Europe, synonymous with "Florence, Venice, Rome," and she has so far been content to accept that estimation. The Futurists will have none of it. These cities, they say, are the Italy of the fifteenth century. Modern Italy is centred round Milan, Turin, Genoa, and the other cities of the north in which a new life is stirring, and these, being the cities of to-day, are to their own generation, the cities of importance. Moreover, if you deny this, you turn your backs on the present and the future, and we will come among you, and, with all possible violence, compel you to believe us.

Now this is precisely the spirit which actuated men in the early days of the French Revolution, between which and the Futurist revolt we do not hesitate to draw a fairly close analogy. Both represent the reaction of a suppressed vitality against a tyrannous and antiquated power; and both were, in the first place, of purely national intention; in the former case the power was that of a social and material government, in the latter, it is of an artistic and academical tradition. The fact that we are not prepared to separate the art from the life of a people makes the analogy all the more significant. The situation of England to the revolutionaries of 1789 is fairly paralleled by ours to those of to-day. The problems which concern us are neither of the precise nature nor of the same intensity as those with which they are faced. To take one instance. We have little of the sentimental eroticism with which Italy and Italian literature is permeated. Notwithstanding the claims of such as Elinor Glyn or Lawrence Hope, that is a statement we can conscientiously make. And moreover, however far we have yet to go, an examination of contemporary English poetry will show that there is among its authors a certain number of young men who are content neither to draw their inspiration from the past nor to suffer its forms to pass unmodified to their needs. It is this fact which we believe constitutes a claim to some distinction between a Victorian and a Georgian period. Let it not be imagined we are making a big boast. Against Signor Marinetti we claim only, what none will deny, that English poetry has not stood still since the days of the Elizabethans, and what some at least will admit, that its development continues, however humbly, to-day as ever. To return to our

analogy, England a hundred years ago had not the immediate need that France possessed for a violent upheaval, but profited by that of its neighbour, continuing and accelerating its own enfranchisement while the pendulum swung violently backward and forward between despotism and a chaotic democracy on the other side of the Channel. Should Signor Marinetti succeed, as we believe he deserves to succeed, in Italy, we dare not prophesy how far this analogy may work itself to a conclusion. But this we ardently believe: that it is essential for us to be allowed to solve our own problems in our own manner. The Latin temperament is not ours, and its present violent materialism will fail to find permanent footing here. With this reservation, we acclaim a movement to which we look for the first step in Italy towards that ordered vitality which is the basis of art and existence alike.

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE are glad to be able to print in the present issue an unpublished poem by the new Laureate, Mr. Robert Bridges. This poem, though written in the early part of this year, is his first to be published since his appointment to the Laureateship.

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It will interest our readers to learn that several alterations and improvements have been planned for the second volume of *POETRY AND DRAMA*.

Firstly, we propose to enlarge the scope of the preliminary notes appearing under the general title *Varia* at the beginning of each number by adding to the usual pages for the free and extensive discussion of matters of current literary interest, short notices of public readings and recitations, performances by dramatic associations, public functions, and other ephemeral, though sometimes entertaining, events in literary circles. We would ask the secretaries of clubs and societies to assist us by keeping us in touch with their meetings performances.

Secondly, the section devoted to criticism will undergo a transformation. In spite of the admirable work of our staff of critics in the past, we have for some time doubted the efficacy of the orthodox methods of criticism in their application to current poetry, and it was only our failure to discover or invent some more compatible method which obliged us to continue along the orthodox lines. We have decided, however, with certain exceptions, to

represent the volumes which come before us in 1914 solely by quotation, without comment. Thus the twenty or thirty pages at present usually devoted to reviews will be occupied instead by extracts from current volumes: in special cases, as occasion may require, we may even devote three or four pages to a single volume. We shall not scruple to reprint, though at lesser length, the inferior and sometimes ridiculous productions of bad poets. We shall, we need hardly say, endeavour to exercise strict impartiality. A certain number of volumes, however, selected from such as appear to us of particular importance as indications of tendencies or changes, will be set aside for treatment by a Chronicler, who will endeavour through their medium to carry on for our readers from quarter to quarter a continuous history in small of the poetry of the time. By this combination between a Chronicle and a series of extracts, we hope to afford our readers a better opportunity of keeping in touch with modern poetry and deciding its qualities for themselves than they can possibly obtain by drawing their conclusions through the personal criticisms of some individual reviewer, however competent and impartial.

Thirdly, we have planned slight alterations and several improvements in the production of **POETRY AND DRAMA**. Some of our readers have complained of its bewildering bulk. We shall endeavour, therefore, to limit each number to one hundred and twenty pages, an amount which we have this year every time found ourselves obliged to exceed. Most of the other proposed alterations are of a minor nature, and will be introduced with a view to increased condensation and clarity.

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The index and title-page to **POETRY AND DRAMA**, Vol. I. (1913) will be ready in January, and can be obtained from the Poetry Bookshop. The price is fourpence post free.

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¶ **POETRY AND DRAMA** is published at the Poetry Bookshop, 35 Devonshire Street, Theobalds Road, London, W.C., quarterly on March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15.

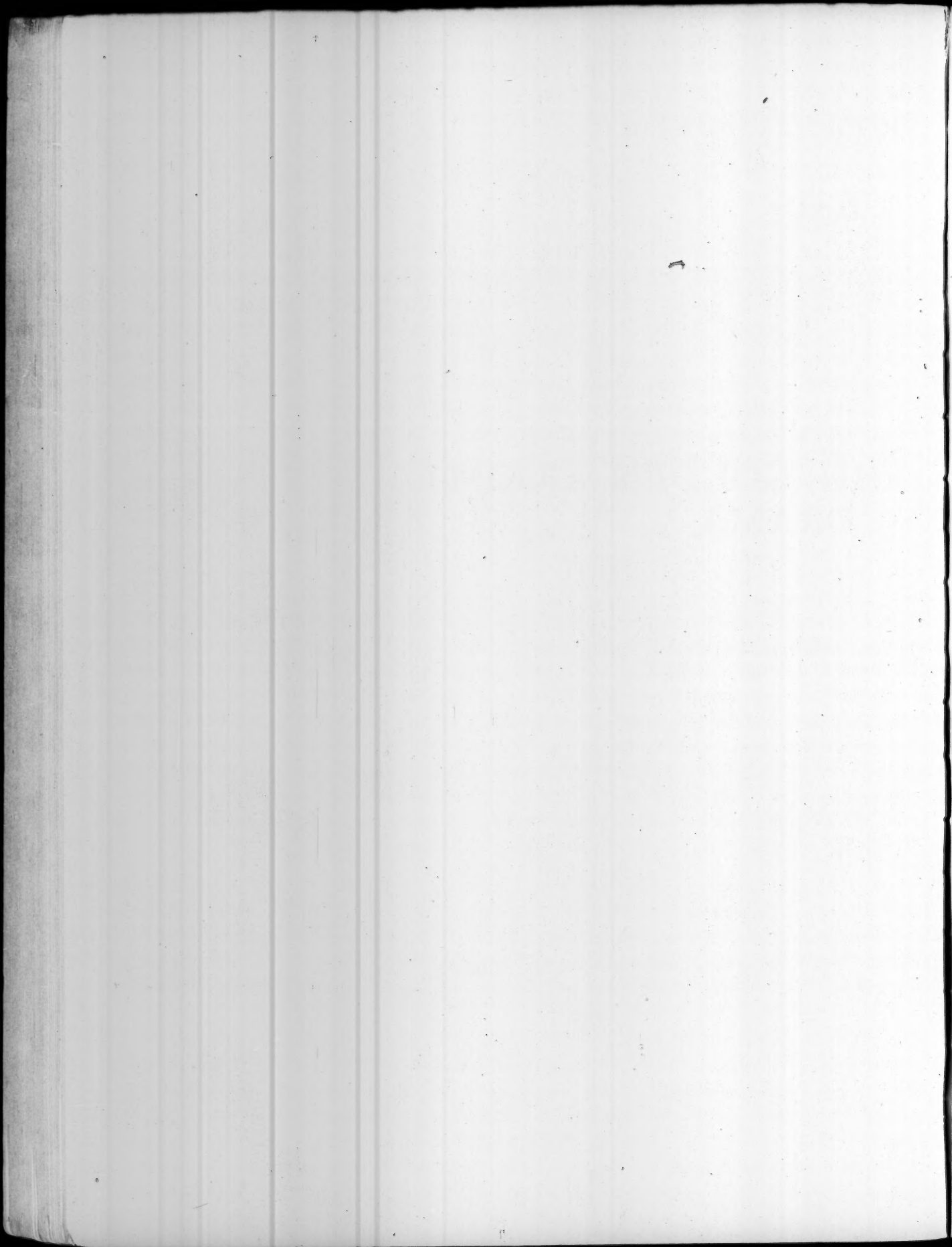
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POEMS

**THE GOLDEN DOOM :
A DRAMA**



ROBERT BRIDGES

FLYCATCHERS

SWEET pretty fledgelings, perched on the rail arow,
Expectantly happy, where ye can watch below
Your parents a-hunting i' the meadow grasses
All the gay morning to feed you with flies ;

Ye recall me a time sixty summers ago,
When, a young chubby chap, I sat just so
With others on a school-form rank'd in a row,
Not less eager and hungry than you, I trow,
With intelligences agape and eyes aglow,
While an authoritative old wise-acre
Stood over us and from a desk fed us with flies.

Dead flies—such as litter the library south-window,
That buzzed at the panes until they fell stiff-baked on the sill,
Or are roll'd up asleep i' the blinds at sunrise,
Or wafer'd flat in a shrunken folio.

A dry biped he was, nurtured likewise
On skins and skeletons, stale from top to toe
With all manner of rubbish and all manner of lies.

THOMAS HARDY

“MY SPIRIT WILL NOT HAUNT THE MOUND”

MY spirit will not haunt the mound
Wherein I rest,
But travel, memory-possessed,
To where my tremulous being found
Life largest, best.

My phantom-footed shape will go
When nightfall grays
Hither and thither along the ways
I and another used to know
In backward days.

And there you'll see me, if a jot
You still should care
For me and for my creepy air ;
If otherwise, then I shall not,
For you, be there.

WALTER DE LA MARE

THE ENCHANTED HILL

FROM height of noon, remote and still,
The sun shines on the empty hill.
No mist, no wind, above, below ;
No living thing strays to and fro.
No bird replies to bird on high,
Cleaving the skies with echoing cry.
Like dreaming water, green and wan,
Glassing the snow of mantling swan,
Like a clear jewel encharactered
With secret symbol of line and word,
Asheen, unruffled, slumbrous, still,
The sunlight streams on the empty hill.

But soon as Night's dark shadows ride
Across its shrouded Eastern side,
When at her kindling, clear and full,
Star beyond star stands visible.

Then course pale phantoms, fleet-foot deer
Lap of its waters icy-clear.
Mounts the large moon, and pours her beams
On bright-fish-flashing, singing streams.
Voices re-echo. Coursing by,
Horsemen, like clouds, wheel silently.
Glide then from out their pitch-black lair
Beneath the dark's ensilvered arch,
Witches becowled into the air ;
And iron pine and emerald larch,
Tents of delight for ravished bird,
Are by loud music thrilled and stirred.
Winging the light, with silver feet,
Beneath their bowers of fragrance met,
In dells of rose and meadowsweet,
In mazed dance the fairies flit ;
While drives his share the Ploughman high
Athwart the daisy-powdered sky :
Till far away, in thickening dew,
Piercing the Eastern shadows through
Rilling in crystal clear and still,
Light 'gins to tremble on the hill.
And, like a mist on faint winds borne,
Silent, forlorn, wells up the morn.

Then the broad sun with burning beams
Steeps slope and peak and gilded streams.
Then no foot stirs ; the brake shakes not ;
Soundless and wet in its green grot
As if asleep, the leaf hangs limp ;
The white dews drip untrembling down,
From bough to bough, orblike, unblown ;
And in strange quiet, shimmering and still,
Morning enshrines the empty hill.

FRANCIS MACNAMARA

THE LOST SOUL

GIVE me the mantle. . . . I recommend that chair. . . .
Sorry I was so long in finding the lamp ;
The fact is, coming in before daylight's strange !
Now how do you like my rooms ?—Delightful ! well,
They should be, here the taste of the town's summed up,
And we to-day of Constantinople know
How best to squeeze whatever's good out of life.
Alas ! the revelation of Heaven, Hell,
The fate to which we're born, and means to escape,
Is taken but as an offer to compound.
God's offer's plain, and were He one to relent,
My temper couldn't believe in him as God ;
I know I'm bound for Hell. . . . But will you unmask ?
True, that was to be the reward for telling you
My life before I so suddenly appeared
Rivalling here the cultivators of life :
But, lady, told to a mask how can the tale
Be lively ? What induced you I cannot guess
To leave at midnight the throng you so adorned
To learn of one you never have seen before. . . .
You're not so sure ? I warn you not to expect
To figure even passingly in my tale.
And yet why am I attracted, why consent
To tell you what my intimates never heard ?
Sit down ! God knows, the attraction only grows ;
I'd follow you, never rest nor let you rest,
Until in rain or sunshine my eyes had seen
That very form of my solitary soul
Everything and nothing announces to me
To be behind that mask !—It were simpler, true,
To tell the story ; sit down, and I'll begin.
I have not country manners, you say, and yet
I come from the country, very much so. . . . Wait !

The country that I lived in I had not reached :
 Your gentleman was a monk, an anchorite,
 A dweller in the Egyptian desert, yes !
 And I was a devotee, by my excess
 Surpassing even the strangest things done there,
 To free the soul in time from temporal bonds,
 And everlasting delusion so escape.
 With studying the subtle torture of sense
 Our senses became refined, our manners formed
 In the great city our hopes dwelt ever in.
 And I was a leader ; you'll have heard my fame,
 The praises of my piety carried home
 By pilgrims of every city of the world. . . .
 No ! names were not in the bargain ; be content
 To hear my tale, as I'll be to see your face.
 How long was I in the desert ? fifteen years ;
 In Antioch I grew up, I had not ceased
 To grow, when my ears were opened to the Truth.
 From being one of the damned I was received
 Into the Church, by baptism shared the hope
 Which Christ has left to mortals ; and you'll believe,
 Not one of your homely Christians I became,—
 Take care you aren't so taken now when you hear.
 Ah ! well may you ask how I, if I believe,—
 And I had more than belief to strengthen me,
 I loved the crucified Christ, and loved to prove,
 With every insult heaped on the flesh, my love.
 Year in, year out, unwashed, uncombed I have gone
 For change of clothing covered with other sacks
 The stinking stuff that fell to pieces on me,
 Nor seen my naked body except to tear
 With rusty hooks and let fester in the sun. . . .
 Still could I not, as I ought to, loathe the thing !
 My knees growing camel-hard upon the rock
 I gashed and salted, from swaying up and down
 I ceased not till, with a battered forehead, stunned
 I sank on the rock,—at waking to devise

Worse penances for my prayer that day cut short.
 And ever did my adoration increase,
 My passion for Christ's passion : alas, my soul !
 It needed to, for demons gave me no rest,
 Showing to me the beauty of mortal things.
 I saw the desert, saw it as never yet
 By placid camel-driver the sand was seen,
 The morning and the evening, the starry night
 And desert heavenly underneath the stars.
 Heavenly ! yes, they have even shown it so,
 And whispered, quoting the holy Trinity,
 " Now in your ecstasy is man made one
 With God creator, the mind that did design
 And mind that is so satisfied, they are one."
 " A trial of me ! " I'd shriek, " for what shall live
 Of this or of the creature beholding this ? "
 Then, nestling in my ear, the devil went on :
 " What's left of you, what powers of pleasure or pain,
 Not gathered into this moment's consciousness
 Of beauty ? where is the thing you want to save ? "
 Then madly before the Cross I flung myself,
 Ground my face in the gravel and called on Christ.
 The visions I've had of women ! heralded
 By carillons devil-tongued that cried in air :
 " Two things dishonour God, the maker of all :
 A work not made in awe of the matter used,
 A life in spite of the body's nature lived :
 Materialist, you ! aiming at effect."
 But ah, the supreme trial was yet to come !
 The silent palm that waved in front of my den,
 That rose so straight and spread so innocently,
 I'd felled in horror, the grass and every leaf
 Whose greenness might have tripped me going to pray
 With bleeding fingers I'd torn up long before.
 One evening, though, as I fetched my daily cup,
 (The daily mud first thrown in the too clear spring,)
 I howled to find that still the evening could make

My dwelling lovely and demons gain my ear,
And hurled this carcase in behind plank and bar.
Stretched in the dark a different voice I heard,
Timid, which I could place, which begged at the door
For shelter, a night's protection from the beasts.
I started up ; there stood what I hadn't seen
For fifteen—life-times rather it seemed than years,
There stood a woman. . . . Ah ! but what did I see ?
That she was beautiful, weary, frightened ? no !
But in her face whatever just I had seen
Of loveliness in morning or evening there,
All that in all those years I'd shuddered at,
That and no other recognised. . . . I quaked ;
But knew that this was the devil's mustering,
His last assault, and I was in sight of peace.
So, holding up between me and her the Cross,
I laughed ! laughed at the devil. The woman stared,
Then fled : ah ! well then might the devil have laughed.
A vision I was left with, deadlier far
Than any image of flesh that he could send ;
No woman had I, to tire of soon or late,
But knowledge of a beauty that's in the world,
A beauty ever hinted in sight and sound,
But never except a man embrace the world
By man as I then saw it to be embraced.
Then walked I, none knowing better what's beyond,
Into the world, and follow since the road
To tortures as much beyond what I devised
As shall their period pass those fifteen years ;
Content I follow, before my eyes a face
Full well I know of the Prince of Hell's making.
Not even the hope to reach that face have I ;
But flowers now look intimately to me. . . .
Ah well, if I am lost, the devil had need
To prove his ingenuity. . . . What d'you say ?
If I'd not laughed—do I hear the words aright ?—
Called any curse on you, only had not laughed,

You'd not have fled, you. . . . Take off the mask ! take off . . .
 You're fooling me ; the idea, ha ! But come,
 I've told my story, fulfil the bargain, you.
 Dear Christ ! the face ! 'Twas real ? you are the same ?
 Possess, my eyes, what I dared not promise you !
 Nor even guessed to-night, as I felt the spell.
 But you, what started you on that pilgrimage ?
 Some haunting sin was it made you dare so much ?
 What ? love, you say ! A most impenitent love
 At word of my excessive passion you felt,
 And loved me more for that brutal fearful laugh :
 You fled, but ever kept a vision, as I ?
 To-night, though, I was strange to you !—Ah, a mask
 The anchorite in his present fineness wears.
 Well met, it was for both of us, then ! My life,
 Oh never be you out of my sight again !—
 Apostate ? what ! you spurn me ? I am the same,
 The man ! what matter appearances to love ?
 Don't be so sure you'd have had that hermit's love !
 No, stay ! for sake of a vision would you go ?—
 You feel with God. . . . What words are these ? You'd increase
 Hell's agony, were it possible, for me !
 Gone ! gone ! Why did I find her ? why did I seek ?
 Oh vanity of vanities ! this is Hell !

RUPERT BROOKE

THE FUNERAL OF YOUTH : THRENODY

THE day that *Youth* had died,
 There came to his grave-side,
 In decent mourning, from the county's ends,
 Those scatter'd friends
 Who had lived the boon companions of his prime,
 And laughed with him and sung with him and wasted,
 In feast and wine and many-crown'd carouse,

The days and nights and dawns of the time
 When *Youth* kept open house,
 Nor left untasted
 Aught of his high emprise and ventures dear,
 No quest of his unshar'd—
 All these, with loitering feet and sad head bar'd,
 Followed their old friend's bier.
Folly went first,
 With muffled bells and coxcomb still revers'd ;
 And after trod the bearers, hat in hand—
Laughter, most hoarse, and Captain *Pride* with tanned
 And martial face all grim, and fussy *Joy*,
 Who had to catch a train, and *Lust*, poor, snivelling boy ;
 These bore the dear departed.
 Behind them, broken-hearted,
 Came *Grief*, so noisy a widow, that all said,
 " Had he but wed
 Her elder sister *Sorrow*, in her stead ! "
 And by her, trying to soothe her all the time,
 The fatherless children, *Colour*, *Tune*, and *Rhyme*
 (The sweet lad *Rhyme*), ran all-uncomprehending.
 Then, at the way's sad ending,
 Round the raw grave they stay'd. Old *Wisdom* read,
 In mumbling tone, the Service for the Dead.
 There stood *Romance*,
 The furrowing tears had mark'd her rougèd cheek ;
 Poor old *Conceit*, his wonder unassuag'd ;
 Dead *Innocency's* daughter, *Ignorance* ;
 And shabby, ill-dress'd *Generosity* ;
 And *Argument*, too full of woe to speak ;
Passion, grown portly, something middle-aged ;
 And *Friendship*—not a minute older, she ;
Impatience, ever taking out his watch ;
Faith, who was deaf, and had to lean, to catch
 Old *Wisdom's* endless drone.
Beauty was there,
 Pale in her black ; dry-eyed ; she stood alone.

Poor maz'd *Imagination* ; *Fancy* wild ;
Ardour, the sunlight on his greying hair ;
Contentment, who had known *Youth* as a child
 And never seen him since. And *Spring* came too,
 Dancing over the tombs, and brought him flowers—
 She did not stay for long.
 And *Truth*, and *Grace*, and all the merry crew,
 The laughing *Winds* and *Rivers*, and little *Hours* ;
 And *Hope*, the dewy-eyed ; and sorrowing *Song* ;—
 Yes, with much woe and mourning general,
 At dead *Youth's* funeral,
 Even these were met once more together, all,
 Who erst the fair and living *Youth* did know ;
 All, except only *Love*. *Love* had died long ago.

HE WONDERS WHETHER TO PRAISE OR TO BLAME HER

I HAVE peace to weigh your worth, now all is over,
 But if to praise or blame you, cannot say.
 For, who decries the loved, decries the lover ;
 Yet what man lauds the thing he's thrown away ?

Be you, in truth, this dull, slight, cloudy naught,
 The more fool I, so great a fool to adore ;
 But if you're that high goddess once I thought,
 The more your godhead is, I lose the more.

Dear fool, pity the fool who thought you clever !
 Dear wisdom, do not mock the fool that missed you !
 Most fair,—the blind has lost your face for ever !
 Most foul,—how could I see you while I kissed you ?

So . . . the poor love of fools and blind I've proved you,
 For, foul or lovely, 'twas a fool that loved you.

CLOUDS

DOWN the blue night the unending columns press
In noiseless tumult, break and wave and flow,
Now tread the far South, or lift rounds of snow
Up to the white moon's hidden loveliness.
Some pause in their grave wandering comradeless,
And turn with profound gesture vague and slow,
As who would pray good for the world, but know
Their benediction empty as they bless.

They say that the Dead die not, but remain
Near to the rich heirs of their grief and mirth.
I think they ride the calm mid-heaven, as these,
In wise majestic melancholy train,
And watch the moon, and the still-raging seas,
And men, coming and going on the earth.

THE PACIFIC,
October 1913.

THE WAY THAT LOVERS USE

THE way that lovers use is this ;
They bow, catch hands, with never a word,
And their lips meet, and they do kiss,
—So I have heard.

They queerly find some healing so,
And strange attainment in the touch ;
There is a secret lovers know,
—I have heard as much.

And theirs no longer joy nor smart,
Changing or ending, night or day ;
But mouth to mouth, and heart on heart,
—So lovers say.

ROBERT FROST

THE FEAR

A LANTERN light from deeper in the barn
Shone on a man and woman in the door
And threw their lurching shadows on a house
Nearby, all dark in every glossy window.
A horse's hoof pawed once the hollow floor,
And the back of the gig they stood beside
Moved in a little. The man grasped a wheel,
The woman spoke out sharply, "Whoa, stand still!
I saw it just as plain as a white plate,"
She said, "as the light on the dashboard ran
Along the bushes at the roadside—a man's face.
You *must* have seen it too."

"I didn't see it.
Are you sure—"

"Yes, I'm sure!"

"— it was a face?"

"Joel, I'll have to look. I can't go in,
I can't, and leave a thing like that unsettled.
Doors locked and curtains drawn will make no difference.
I always have felt strange when we came home
To the dark house after so long an absence,
And the key, rattled loudly into place,
Seemed to warn some one to be getting out
At one door as we entered at another.
What if I'm right, and some one all the time—
Don't hold my arm!"

"I say, it's some one passing."

"You speak as if this were a travelled road.
You forget where we are. What is beyond,
That he'd be going to or coming from
At such an hour of night, and on foot too?
What was he standing still for in the bushes?"

"It's not so very late—it's only dark.
There's more in it than you're inclined to say.
Did he look like——?"

"He looked like any one.
I'll never rest to-night unless I know.
Give me the lantern."

"You don't want the lantern."

She pushed past him and got it for herself.

"You're not to come," she said. "This is my business,
If the time's come to face it. I'm the one
To put it the right way. He'd never dare—
Listen! He kicked a stone. Hear that, hear that!
He's coming towards us. Joel, go in—please.
Hark!—I don't hear him now. But please go in."

"In the first place, you can't make me believe it's——"

"It is—or some one else he's sent to watch.
And now's the time to have it out with him
While we know definitely where he is.
Let him get off and he'll be everywhere
Around us, looking out of trees and bushes
Till I shan't dare to set a foot outdoors.
And I can't stand it. Joel, let me go!"

"But it's nonsense to think he'd care enough."

"You mean you couldn't understand his caring;
Oh, but you see he hadn't had enough——
Joel, I won't—I won't—I promise you.
We mustn't say hard things. You mustn't either."

"I'll be the one, if anybody goes !
But you give him the advantage with this light.
What couldn't he do to us standing here !
And if to see was what he wanted, why
He has seen all there was to see and gone."

He appeared to forget to keep his hold,
But advanced with her as she crossed the grass.

"What do you want ?" she cried to all the dark.
She stretched up tall to overlook the light
That hung in both hands hot against her skirt.

"There's no one ; so you're wrong," he said.

"There is.—

What do you want ?" she cried, and then herself
Was startled when an answer really came.

"Nothing." It seemed to come from far away.

She reached a hand to Joel for support.
The smell of scorching woollen made her faint.

"What are you doing round this house at night ?"

"Nothing." A pause ; there seemed no more to say.

And then the voice again : "You seem afraid.
I saw by the way you whipped up the horse.
I'll just come forward in the lantern light
And let you see."

"Yes, do.—Joel, go back !"

She stood her ground against the noisy steps
That came on, but her body rocked a little.

"You see," the voice said.

"Oh." She looked and looked.

"You don't see—I've a child here by the hand."

"What's a child doing at this time of night——?"

"Out walking. Every child should have the memory
Of at least one long-after-bed-time walk.
What, son?"

"Then I should think you'd try to find
Somewhere to walk——"

"The highway, as it happens—
We're stopping for the fortnight down at Dean's."

"But if that's all—Joel—you realise—
You won't think anything. You understand?
You understand that we have to be careful.
This is a very, very lonely place.
Joel!" She spoke as if she couldn't turn.
The swinging lantern lengthened to the ground,
It touched, it struck it, clattered and went out.

A HUNDRED COLLARS

LANCASTER bore him—such a little town—
Such a great man! It doesn't see him often
Of late years, though he keeps the old homestead,
And sends the children down there with their mother
To run wild in the summer—a little wild.
Sometimes he joins them for a day or two,
Never for more. Old friends—he can't get near them.
They meet him in the general store at night,
Preoccupied with formidable mail,
Rifling a printed letter while he talks.
They seem afraid. He wouldn't have it so.

Though a great scholar, he's a democrat—
If not at heart, at least on principle.

Lately when coming down to Lancaster,
His train being late, he missed another train,
And had four hours to wait at Woodsville Junction
After eleven o'clock at night. Too tired
To think of sitting such an ordeal out,
He turned to the hotel to find a bed.
"No room," the night-clerk said, "unless——"
Woodsville's a place of shrieks and wandering lights
And cars that shock and rattle—and *one* hotel.

"You say 'unless'?"

"Unless you wouldn't mind
Sharing a room with some one else."

"Who is it?"

"A man."

"So I should hope. What kind of man?"

"I know him : he's all right. A man's a man.
Separate beds you understand, of course."
The night-clerk blinked his eyes and dared him on.

"Who's that man sleeping in the office chair?
Has he had the refusal of my chance?"

"He was afraid of being robbed or murdered.
What do you say?"

"I'll have to have a bed."

The night-clerk led him up three flights of stairs
And down a narrow passage full of doors,

At the last one of which he knocked and entered.
"Lafe, here's a fellow wants to share your room."

"Show him this way. I'm not afraid of him.
I'm not so drunk I can't take care of myself."

The night-clerk clapped a bedstead on the foot.
"This will be yours. Good-night," he said, and vanished.

"Lafe was the name, I think ?"

"Yes, *Lafayette*—
You got it the first time. And yours ?"

"Magoon,
Doctor Magoon."

"A doctor ?"

"Well, a teacher."

"Professor Square-the-Circle-till-you're-tired ?
Hold on ! There's something I can't think of now
I want to ask you—don't let me forget."

The doctor looked at Lafe, then looked away.
A man ? A brute ! Unclad above the waist
He sat there creased and shining in the lamp-light,
Fumbling the buttons in a well-starched shirt.
"I'm moving into a size-larger shirt.
I've felt mean lately, mean's no name for it.
I just found what the matter was to-night.
I've been a-choking like a nursery tree
When it outgrows the wire band of its name-tag.
I thought it was the hot spell we've been having ;
'Twas nothing but my foolish hanging back,
Not liking to own up I'd grown a size.
Number eighteen this is. What size do you wear ?"

The doctor caught his throat convulsively.

"Oh—ah—fifteen—fifteen."

"Fifteen ! You say so !

I can remember when I wore fifteen.
And now I think of it, I have at home
More than a hundred collars, size fifteen.
Too bad to waste them. Some one ought to use them.
I'll send them to you—hang me if I don't !
What makes you stand there on one leg like that ?
You're not much furtherer than where Kike left you.
You act as if you wished you hadn't come.
Sit down or lie down, friend—you make me nervous."

The doctor made a subdued dash for it,
And propped himself at bay against two pillows.

"Not that way with your shoes on Kike's white bed.
You can't rest that way. Let me pull your shoes off."

"Don't touch me, please. I say, don't touch me, please.
I'll not be put to bed by you, my man."

"Just as you say. Have it your own way, then.
'My man, my man.' You talk like a professor.
Speaking of who's afraid of who, however,
I'm thinking I have more to lose than you
If anything should happen to be wrong.
Who wants to cut your number fifteen throat ?
Let's have a show-down as an evidence
Of good faith. There is eighty dollars.
Come, if you're not afraid."

"I'm not afraid.

There's five—that's all I have."

"You'll let me search you ?

Who are you moving over for ? For me ?

You'd better tuck your money under you
And sleep on it, the way I always do
When I'm with people I don't trust at night."

" Shall I convince you, if I leave it there,
Right on the counterpane, that I do trust you ? "

" You'd say that, anyway.—I'm a collector :
My eighty isn't mine—you won't think that.
I pick it up a dollar at a time
All round the country for the *Weekly News*,
Published in Bow. You know the *Weekly News* ? "

" Known it since I was young."

" Then you know me.

We're getting on together. Now we're talking !
I've been collecting for it all my life.
I'm sort of something for it at the front.
My business is to find out what folks want :
They pay for it and so they ought to have it.
Fairbanks, he says to me—he's editor—
' Feel out the public sentiment,' he says.
A good deal comes on me, when all is said.
The only trouble is, we disagree
In politics. I'm Vermont Democrat—
You know what that is—sort of double-dyed.
The News has always been Republican.
Fairbanks, he says to me, ' Help us this year,'
Meaning by us their ticket. ' No,' says I,
' I can't and won't. You've been in long enough.
It's time you turned around and boosted us.
You'll have to pay me more than ten a week
If I'm expected to elect Bill Taft.
I doubt if I could do it anyway.' "

" You seem to shape the paper's policy."

"You see I'm in with everybody, know 'em all.
I almost know their farms as well as they do."

"It must be pleasant, driving round the country."

"It's business, but I can't say it's not fun.
What I like best's the lay of different farms,
Coming out on them from a stretch of woods,
Or over a hill, or round a sudden corner.
I like to find folks getting out in spring,
Raking the door-yard, working round the house.
Later they get out further in the fields.
Everything may be shut except the barn.
The family's all away in some back meadow.
There's a hay load a-coming—when it comes.
And later still they all seem driven in.
The fields are stripped to lawn, the garden patches
Stripped to bare ground, the apple-trees
To whips and poles. There's nobody about.
The chimney, though, keeps up a good brisk smoking.
And I lie back and ride. I take the reins
Only when some one's coming. And the mare
Stops when she likes—I tell her when to go.
I've spoiled Jemima in more ways than one.
She's got so she turns in at every house
Whether I have an errand there or not,
As if she had some sort of curviture.
She thinks I'm sociable—I maybe am.
It's seldom I get down except for meals, though.
Folks entertain me from the kitchen doorstep,
All in a family row, down to the youngest."

"One would suppose they might not be as glad
To see you as you might be to see them."

"Because I want their dollar ? I don't want
Anything they've not got. I never dun."

I'm there and they can pay me if they like.
I go nowhere on purpose—I happen by.
Sorry there is no cup to give you a drink.
I drink out of the bottle—not your style.
Mayn't I offer you—— ? ”

“ Oh, no, no, thank you ! ”

“ Just as you say. Well, now I'm leaving you.
You'll rest easier when I am out, perhaps.
Lie down—let yourself go and get some sleep.
But first—let's see—what was I going to ask you ?
Those collars—who shall I address them to,
Suppose you aren't awake when I come back ? ”

“ Really, friend, I can't let you. You may need them.”

“ Not till I shrink, when they'll be out of style.”

“ But really, I—I have so many collars.”

“ I don't know who I rather would have have them.
They're only turning yellow where they are.
But you're the doctor, as the saying is.
I'll put the light out. Don't you wait for me ;
I've just begun the night. You get some sleep.
I'll knock so-fashion and peep round the door
When I come back, so you'll know who it is.
There's nothing I'm afraid of like a scared man.
I don't want you should shoot me through the head.
What am I doing carrying off this bottle ?
There now, you get some sleep.”

He shut the door.
The doctor slid a little down the pillow.

JOHN ALFORD

REVOLT : AN ODE

LIFE ! Life ! we worship thee.
Thou art in us and we in thee, O Life,
And for thy sustenance and ours
Must we, thine embodiment, thy children, combat.
Yea, with a very bitter strife

Will we employ thine hours,
Knowing no other rule, no law but this —
Life is our god, and in us godhead lies.
Therefore who would deny us life denies
The godhead in himself, and has unfit
Himself for fellowship of us.

Shall we refrain
For any will but thine to take our own ?
Shall we not break the bread and pour the wine
And with the hand of brotherhood

Freely distribute it ?
We thy first worshippers, thy vehement priests,
Will with fierce zeal and terrible hands of blood
Enter the temples builded for thy throne
To slay the mockers that therein make blasphemous feasts,
And from the pit

Where it has too long lain
Restore the honour which is ours and thine.

It was said thine enemy, O Life, was Death.
It is not so.

Does the night war with day ? or sleep with waking ?
Thine enemy is stagnation, soul-disease,
A rot as of the flesh, a vertigo
That doth perpetually vomit evil forth,
Yet gives the heart no ease,
While coiled within the body sickness comfortably lies.
O come upon us as a holy flame
To fire our hearts toward thy great emprise.

Kindle us unto wrath,
That though we fear to die
We turn not from our perilous undertaking,
But battle and destroy this devilry
 Of soul and body-breaking.
Till in the goodliness of joy we know
Ourselves, eat of the earth and drink the sky,
And with renewed spirit glorify thy name.

VISION

HE has seen a vision
 The other side of the sun.
He has gazed right through what blinds us
 Even to glance upon.

Never since that day
 Has he put his hand to the plough,
But sits alone with wide eyes
 And soft, unwrinkled brow,

Or lies full length asleep
 Among the barley stooks,
Or wanders at the edge of the wood
 To watch the wheeling rooks.

He never joins the company
 Of men, nor seek him they,
But he stands sometimes by the green plot
 Where the children laugh at play.

'Tis sure he's very happy,
 Though he talks with never a one,
And answers only, "I have seen
 The other side of the sun."

DOUGLAS GOLDRING

SPANIARDS'

THE moon shone withering, wild and white
And ruddy gleamed the bars ;
And far below, the city's light
Streamed up to meet the stars.

"Look down," ses Jim, "them streets that shine ;
And look, the gaudy sky !
By God, to-night, my girl, you're mine "
—And glad enough was I.

Oh, why did blow so soft and warm
That breeze on Spaniards' Road !
I never thought to take no harm,
Nor bear so hard a load.

E. N. da C. ANDRADE

RED STOCKINGS

OH, red stockings, branded woman,
Bad and mad degenerate,
Hay in hair, and all too human
Look of kisses, flushed, elate,
Come, put on a staid air,
Burn your stockings, brush your hair,
Walk the straight and narrow way,
Go and pray, girl, go and pray.

Ho, old man, old fellow talking,
Would you have me still more fair
Under ordered tresses, walking
Narrow ways with legs all bare ?
Things like this shall never be
With a modest maid like me,
Though no doubt 'twould please you well.
Go to hell, sir, go to hell.

E. BUXTON SHANKS

SONGS

I

SINCE love is mortal as man
Give good heed to your love,
Lest a year be the length of its span
Or a day or an hour be enough.

Guard it, for is it not fair ?
Shield it, for is it not flame ?
Look to it, so that it wear
Ever and always the same.

Love dying is dead for good,
Kisses cannot revive it.
Look to it, lest you should
See love die and survive it.

II

O thou, my belovèd,
How art thou so fair
From the rounded ankle
To the crown of bright hair ?
Oh how hast thou bound me
Who fain would be free ?
What spells hast invented
For capturing me ?

The boughs on the river
Fall drooping and low :
We watch their green shadows
Lie drowning below.

O fold round us, branches,
From curious eyes ;
You, leaves of the elder,
Some curtain devise.

Come round us so closely
That no man may see
In the shallow green channel
My loved one and me :
Then I will discover
How she is so fair
From the rounded ankle
To the crown of bright hair.

III

I heard a young girl singing
Under the summer sky :
A boy was lying in her arms
With quiet lip and eye.
"This is my child and lover ;
My lover when he's strong,
But, when he's spent with loving,
My child the whole day long.

"I nurse him on my bosom,
So dear the burden is,
And soothe his weary eyelids
With half a soft-lipped kiss."
And I saw in them together,
Amid the grasses wild,
The maiden with her lover,
The mother with her child.

W. H. DAVIES

THE BIRD OF PARADISE

HERE comes Kate Summers who, for gold,
Takes any man to bed :
“ You knew my friend, Nell Barnes,” said she ;
“ You knew Nell Barnes—she’s dead.

“ Nell Barnes was bad on all you men,
Unclean, a thief as well ;
Yet all my life I have not found
A better friend than Nell.

“ So I sat at her side at last,
For hours, till she was dead ;
And yet she had no sense at all
Of any word I said.

“ For all her cry but came to this—
‘ Not for the world ! Take care :
Don’t touch that bird of paradise,
Perched on the bed-post there ! ’

“ I asked her would she like some grapes,
Some damsons ripe and sweet ;
A custard made with new-laid eggs,
Or tender fowl to eat.

“ I promised I would follow her,
To see her in her grave ;
And buy a wreath with borrowed pence,
If nothing I could save.

“ Yet still her cry but came to this—
‘ Not for the world ! Take care :
Don’t touch that bird of paradise,
Perched on the bedpost there ! ’ ”

MADELEINE CARON ROCK

I. "THE WITCH"

I DON'T know how she came into the room—
I didn't see her broom ;

The two dogs saw her, whisking here and there,
And howled with bristling hair.

It can't have been much more than half an hour,
Yet all the milk went sour.

Silence was everywhere, and her black cat—
My heart went pit-a-pat.

Then she went up the chimney on a flame—
Perhaps the way she came !

II. CONTEMPLATION

SOMETIMES there is a whirl of things,
Of earthly things that move and meet ;
Sometimes a mist of nothingness ;
Sometimes my spirit, winged and fleet,
Clears earth in one quick bound and lands
Among the grasses at God's feet.

III

AND the words—the words she said
Wandered lightly o'er my soul ;
But they left a track of flame,
Left the white fire burning there.
So I rose and followed her ;
So I set my face for Freedom.
Oh, I dared and I will dare.
I am fearless ! who of old—
In the flickering of the firelight—
Hid my face and was afraid.

IV. THE YEARS' HUNTING

ALL through the city
And the country-side,
The years go hunting,
Unsatisfied.

Even the wild beasts
Lie down one by one ;
The years' long hunting
Is never done.

They take the white flowers
Where they early blow,
All the red roses,
Asters a-row.

Power without pity,
Break and will not mend—
The years a' hunting,
They took my friend.

Who can withstand them ?
When the years go by
They give no answer
And heed no cry,

Yet, if you cower,
Weaponless, and plead—
"Shoot, trap, and slay me,
'Tis all my need."

You have an answer,
For you cannot die ;
The years go hunting
And pass you by.

V

LOVE cooled my feet upon the white high road
 When I was weary ; and Love ran
 Before me with a scented bough for shade.

And in the twilight sang such songs
 That even now
 (Though I have long time banished him)
 My heart will hush—and lean—
 And listen for the music that Love made.

VI

SUMMER scents ! Poor Londoners
 Don't know what it means—
 Stopping still with lifted head—
 “ Beans ! ”

Summer's wealth—the commons stretch
 Wide and gold—of course—
 May has set the world afire—
 Gorse !

Summer songs ! Why, all the time
 They're in all the trees.
 Listen in the blossomed lime—
 Bees !

Summer's self alone can run
 Through the long sweet list,
 Then the country's wrapped up white—
 Mist !

VII. SPINDRIFT

BETWEEN the sighing tree and your hot hands
Stand I—the spindrift of the years.
Ages have washed up hopes of lives to be
Afoam in my half-heeding heart.
I stand apart,
Wrapped in a myriad gipsy dreams and fears.

A far-back mother sends her cry through me
Of murmurous pity, love that understands.

Some long-dead hero sets my eyes aflame
With pride and glory and a royal strife,
The pageant, and return with honoured knife.

Oh, I would spread my soul out for the poor to walk
to God on:
Saints of old, the passion of your worship makes me
bold.

And deep within me, slow and sure,
Surge of that tide that desolating came
I feel the flame,
Scorching my soul where cities flare to heaven.

Cool round my feet the grass of that young world,
Of all things good, new hopes, new leaves unfurled,
And yet at even,
Just when God walks and I would fain be free,
The serpent wakes and wars and wiles in me.

In me, who am a child with calm heart-beat,
Counting the stars God scatters at my feet.

Or am I God, who made the great blue heaven,
And sees His creatures mix and move and meet?

Hot hands that master mine with all the stress
Of coming hungry souls across the waste,
Tree, whose bare boughs are swayed and interlaced
In haunting whisper of your deathlessness,
How can I answer ? ask the dust to blow
Against the wind that whirls it to and fro.

And when the storm of every wave is o'er
The scattered spindrift lies upon the shore.

VIII

WHEN Starra plays her violin—
There's dancing sunlight on the river ;
The little leaves at evening shiver ;
You'd think the thrush had wandered in.

A slow-worm glides along the grass,
Or caravans of gipsies pass.

And once—she gathered all the sea
And a great cold wave came over me !

O ! life's a race with souls to win,
When Starra plays her violin !

SHERARD VINES

TO THE RIVER-VILLAGER

IT is well for you to be
An earshot neighbour of the sea.

Perhaps at time of morning star
You know how flood-tide and young breeze
Savourly, freshly, by the bar

Creep up and wash the village quays,
And swing some unhasped flap ajar,
And start a swishing in the trees.

Then the brown sails run free up tide
And take up moorings, hull by hull,
With creaking blocks, and chains a-slide.

And as the sky becomes more full
Of gold, and spreads an highway wide
Across the sea-salt ruffled pool,

You know how good it is to be
An earshot neighbour of the sea.

THE PROPHET

WHEN the glory of the Lord comes it's like a mighty wind,
You hear it roar and thunder in the forests there behind,
And when the blast is on you and the rocks begin to nod
Your soul flaps like a pennon in the holy wind of God.

Then you fly like an eagle and run like a wolf
And hunt the roads till sundown, and brood on the gulf,
You are dumb as a sepulchre, for what man can afford
To miss the stinging music of the glory of the Lord ?

Far, far beneath you do the great sister seas
Bellow one to other and fall upon their knees,
The sons of God are out and set a veil upon the moon,
They tell the seven stars that the Lord is in His noon.

Yes, it's given to a few men to run before the wind
And hear it roar and thunder in the forests there behind ;
And when the blast is on them and the rocks begin to nod
To feel their souls as thistledown in the holy wind of God.

FRANCES CORNFORD

THE OLD WITCH IN THE COPSE

(To be sung)

I AM a witch, and a kind old witch,
There's many a one knows that—
Alone I live in my little dark house
With Pillycock, my cat.

A girl came running through the night,
When all the winds blew free :—
“O mother, change a young man's heart,
That will not look on me.

“O mother, brew a magic mead
To stir his heart so cold.”
“Just as you will, my dear,” said I ;
“And I thank you for your gold.”

So here am I in the wattled copse
Where all the twigs are brown,
To find what I need, to brew my mead
As the dark of night comes down.

Primroses in my old hands,
Sweet to smell and young,
And violets blue that spring in the grass
Wherever the larks have sung,

With celandines as heavenly crowns,
Yellowy-gold and bright ;—
All of these, O all of these,
Shall bring her love's delight.

But orchids growing snakey-green,
Speckled dark with blood,
And fallen leaves that sered and shrank
And rotted in the mud,

With nettles burning blistering-harsh
And blinding thorns above ;—
All of these, O all of these
Shall bring the pains of love.

Shall bring the pains of love, my Puss,
That cease not night or day,
The bitter rage nought can assuage
Till it bleeds the heart away.

Pillycock mine, my hands are full,
My pot is on the fire.
Purr, my pet, this fool shall get
Her fool's desire.

HAROLD MONRO

CHILDREN OF LOVE

THE holy boy
Went from his mother out in the cool of the day
Over the sun-parched fields
And in among the olives shining green and shining grey.

There was no sound,
No smallest voice of any shivering stream.
Poor sinless little boy,
He desired to play, and to sing ; he could only sigh and dream.

Suddenly came
Running along to him naked, with curly hair,
That rogue of the lovely world,
That other beautiful child whom the virgin Venus bare.

The holy boy
Gazed with those sad blue eyes that all men know.
Impudent Cupid stood
Panting, holding an arrow and pointing his bow.

(Will you not play ?
Jesus, run to him, run to him, swift for our joy.
Is he not holy, like you ?
Are you afraid of his arrows, O beautiful dreaming boy ?)

And now they stand
Watching one another with timid gaze ;
Youth has met youth in the wood,
But holiness will not change its melancholy ways.

Cupid at last
Draws his bow and softly lets fly a dart.
Smile for a moment, sad world !—
It has grazed the white skin and drawn blood from the sorrowful heart.

Now, for delight,
Cupid tosses his locks and goes wantonly near ;
But the child that was born to the cross
Has let fall on his cheek, for the sadness of life, a compassionate tear.

Marvellous dream !
Cupid has offered his arrows for Jesus to try ;
He has offered his bow for the game.
But Jesus went weeping away, and left him there wondering why.

THE GOLDEN DOOM

(IN ONE ACT)

· *SCENE.*—Outside the King's great door in Zericon.

TIME.—Some while before the fall of Babylon.

(Two sentries pace to and fro, then halt, one on each side of the great door.)

- 1ST SENTRY : The day is deadly sultry.
- 2ND SENTRY : I would that I were swimming down the Gyshon, on the cool side, under the fruit-trees.
- 1ST SENTRY : It is like to thunder or the fall of a dynasty.
- 2ND SENTRY : It will grow cool by night-fall. Where is the king ?
- 1ST SENTRY : He rows in his golden barge with ambassadors, or whispers with captains concerning future wars. The stars spare him !
- 2ND SENTRY : Why do you say " the stars spare him " ?
- 1ST SENTRY : Because if a doom from the stars fall suddenly on a king it swallows up his people and all things round about him, and his palace falls and the walls of his city and citadel, and the apes come in from the woods and the large beasts from the desert, so that you would not say that a king had been there at all.
- 2ND SENTRY : But why should a doom from the stars fall on the king ?
- 1ST SENTRY : Because he seldom placates them.
- 2ND SENTRY : Ah ! I have heard that said of him.
- 1ST SENTRY : Who are the stars that a man should scorn them ? Should they that rule the thunder, the plague and the earthquake, withhold these things save for much prayer ? Always ambassadors are with the king, and his commanders, come in from distant lands, prefects of cities and makers of the laws, but never the priests of the stars.
- 2ND SENTRY : Hark ! was that thunder ?
- 1ST SENTRY : Believe me, the stars are angry.

(Enter a stranger. He wanders towards the king's door, gazing about him.)

SENTRIES : *(Lifting their spears at him)* Go back ! Go back !
 STRANGER : Why ?
 1ST SENTRY : It is death to touch the king's door.
 STRANGER : I am a stranger from Thessaly.
 1ST SENTRY : It is death even for a stranger.
 STRANGER : Your door is strangely sacred.
 1ST SENTRY : It is death to touch it.

(STRANGER wanders off.)

(Enter two children hand in hand.)

BOY : *(To SENTRY)* I want to see the king to pray for a hoop.

(SENTRY smiles.)

BOY : *(Pushes the door.) (To GIRL)* I cannot open it. *(To the SENTRY)* Will it do as well if I pray to the king's door ?
 SENTRY : Yes, quite as well. *(Turns to talk to the other SENTRY)* Is there any one in sight ?

2ND SENTRY : *(Shading his eyes)* Nothing but a dog, and he far out on the plain.

1ST SENTRY : Then we can talk awhile and eat bash.

BOY : King's door, I want a little hoop.

(The SENTRIES take a little bash between finger and thumb, from pouches, and put that wholly forgotten drug to their lips.)

GIRL : *(Pointing)* My father is a taller soldier than that.

BOY : My father can write. He taught me.

GIRL : Ho ! Writing frightens nobody : my father is a soldier.

BOY : I have a lump of gold. I found it in the stream that runs down to Gyshon.

GIRL : I have a poem. I found it in my own head.

BOY : Is it a long poem ?

GIRL : No. But it would have been, only there were no more rhymes for sky.

BOY : What is your poem ?

GIRL : I saw a purple bird

Go up against the sky ;

And it went up and up

And round about did fly.

BOY : I saw it die.

GIRL : That doesn't scan.
 BOY : Oh, that doesn't matter.
 GIRL : Do you like my poem ?
 BOY : Birds aren't purple.
 GIRL : My bird was.
 BOY : Oh !
 GIRL : Oh, you don't like my poem !
 BOY : Yes, I do.
 GIRL : No, you don't ! You think it horrid.
 BOY : No, I don't.
 GIRL : Yes, you do. Why didn't you say you liked it? It is the
 only poem I ever made.
 BOY : I do like it ! I do like it !
 GIRL : You don't ! you don't !
 BOY : Don't be angry. I'll write it on the door for you.
 GIRL : You'll write it ?
 BOY : Yes, I can write it. My father taught me. I'll write it with
 my lump of gold. It makes a yellow mark on the iron
 door.
 GIRL : Oh ! do write it ! I would like to see it written like real
 poetry.

(Boy begins to write. Girl watches.)

1ST SENTRY : You see, we'll be fighting again soon.
 2ND SENTRY : Only a little war. We never have more than a little war
 with the hill-folk.
 1ST SENTRY : When a man goes to fight, the curtains of the gods wax
 thicker than ever before between his eyes and the
 future; he may go to a great or to a little war.
 2ND SENTRY : There can only be a little war with the hill-folk.
 1ST SENTRY : Yet sometimes the gods laugh.
 2ND SENTRY : At whom ?
 1ST SENTRY : At kings.
 2ND SENTRY : Why have you grown uneasy about this war in the hills ?
 1ST SENTRY : Because the king is powerful beyond any of his fathers,
 and has more fighting men, more horses, and wealth
 that could have ransomed his father and his grand-
 father, and dowered their queens and daughters ; and

every year his miners bring him more from the opal-mines and from the turquoise-quarries. He has grown very mighty.

2ND SENTRY : Then he will the more easily crush the hill-folk in a little war.

1ST SENTRY : When kings grow very mighty the stars grow very jealous.

BOY : I've written your poem.

GIRL : Oh, have you really ?

BOY : Yes, I'll read it to you. (*Reads.*)

I saw a purple bird

Go up against the sky ;

And it went up and up

And round about did fly.

I saw it die.

GIRL : It doesn't scan.

BOY : That doesn't matter.

(*Enter furtively a SPY. He crosses stage. Exit.*)

(*The SENTRIES cease to talk.*)

GIRL : That man frightens me.

BOY : He is only one of the king's spies.

GIRL : But I don't like the king's spies. They frighten me.

BOY : Come on, then, we'll run away.

SENTRY : (*Noticing children again*) Go away ! Go away ! The king is coming ; he will eat you.

(*Boy throws a stone at the SENTRY and exit.*)

(*Enter another SPY. He crosses the stage.*)

(*Enter third SPY. He notices the door. Examines it and utters an owl-like whistle. No. 2 comes back. They do not speak. Both whistle. No. 3 comes. All examine the door.*)

(*Enter the KING and his CHAMBERLAIN. The KING wears a purple robe. SENTRIES smartly transfer their spears to their left hands and return their right arms to their right sides. They then lower their spears until their points are within an inch of the ground, at the same time raising their right hands above their heads. They stand for some moments thus. Then they lower their right arms to their right sides, at the same time raising their spears. In the next motion they take their spears into their right hands and lower the butts to the floor where they were before, the spears slanting forward a little. Both SENTRIES must move together precisely.*)

1ST SPY : *(Runs forward to the KING and kneels, abasing his forehead to the floor, loquitur :)* Something has written on the iron door.

CHAMBERLAIN : On the iron door !

KING : Some fool has done it. Who has been here since yesterday ?

1ST SENTRY : *(Shifts his hand a little higher on his spear, brings the spear to his side, and closes his heels all in one motion. He then takes one pace backwards with his right foot, then he kneels on his right knee. When he has done this he speaks, but not before.)* Nobody, Majesty, but a stranger from Thessaly.

KING : Did he touch the iron door ?

1ST SENTRY : No, Majesty ; he tried to, but we drove him away.

KING : How near did he come ?

1ST SENTRY : Nearly to our spears, Majesty.

KING : What was his motive in seeking to touch the iron door ?

1ST SENTRY : I do not know, Majesty.

KING : Which way did he go ?

1ST SENTRY : *(Pointing left)* That way, Majesty, an hour ago.

(The KING whispers with one of his spies, who stoops and examines the ground and steals away. SENTRY rises.)

KING : *(To his two remaining spies)* What does this writing say ?

A SPY : We cannot read, Majesty.

KING : A good spy should know everything.

2ND SPY : We watch, Majesty, and we search out, Majesty. We read shadows, and we read foot-prints, and whispers in secret places. But we do not read writing.

KING : *(To CHAMBERLAIN)* See what it is.

CHAMBERLAIN : *(Goes up and reads)* It is treason, Majesty.

KING : Read it.

CHAMBERLAIN : I saw a purple bird
 Go up against the sky ;
 And it went up and up
 And round about did fly.
 I saw it die.

1ST SENTRY : *(Aside)* The stars have spoken.

KING : (To SENTRY) Has any one been here but the stranger from Thessaly ?

SENTRY : (Kneeling as before) Nobody, Majesty.

KING : You saw nothing ?

1ST SENTRY : Nothing but a dog far out upon the plain and the children of the guard at play.

KING : (To 2ND SENTRY) And you ?

2ND SENTRY : (Kneeling) Nothing, Majesty.

CHAMBERLAIN : That is strange.

KING : It is some secret warning.

CHAMBERLAIN : It is treason.

KING : It is from the stars.

CHAMBERLAIN : No, no, Majesty. Not from the stars, not from the stars. Some man has done it ! Yet the thing should be interpreted. Shall I send for the prophets of the stars ?

(The KING beckons to his spies. They run up to him.)

KING : Find me some prophet of the stars. (Exeunt SPIES.) I fear that we may go no more, my Chamberlain, along the winding ways of unequalled Zericon, nor play dahoori with the golden balls. I have thought more of my people than of the stars, and more of Zericon than of windy heaven.

CHAMBERLAIN : Believe me, Majesty, some idle man has written it and passed by. Your spies shall find him, and then his name will be soon forgotten.

KING : Yes, yes ! Perhaps you are right, though the sentries saw no one. No doubt some beggar did it.

CHAMBERLAIN : Yes, Majesty, some beggar has surely done it. But look, here come two prophets of the stars. They shall tell us that this is idle.

(Enter two PROPHETS, a BOY attending them. All bow deeply to the KING. The two SPIES steal in again and stand at back.)

KING : Some beggar has written a rhyme on the iron gate, and, as the ways of rhyme are known to you, I desired you, rather as poets than as prophets, to say whether there was any meaning in it.

CHAMBERLAIN : 'Tis but an idle rhyme.

1ST PROPHET : *(Bows again, and goes up to door. He glances at the writing, loquitur :)* Come hither, servant of those that serve the stars.

(Attendant approaches.)

1ST PROPHET : Bring hither our golden cloaks, for this may be a matter for rejoicing; and bring our green cloaks, also, for this may tell of young, new, beautiful things with which the stars will one day gladden the KING; and bring our black cloaks, also, for it may be a doom. *(Exit Boy.)* PROPHET *goes up to door and reads solemnly :*) The stars have spoken.

(Re-enter ATTENDANT with cloaks.)

KING : I tell you that some beggar has written this.

1ST PROPHET : It is written in pure gold. *(He dons the black cloak over body and head.)*

KING : What do the stars mean ? What warning is it ?

1ST PROPHET : I cannot say.

KING : *(To 2ND PROPHET)* Come you, then, and tell us what the warning is.

2ND PROPHET : *(Goes up to the door and reads.)* The stars have spoken. *(He cloaks himself in black.)*

KING : What is it ? What does it mean ?

2ND PROPHET : We do not know, but it is from the stars.

CHAMBERLAIN : It is a harmless thing; there is no harm in it, Majesty. Why should not birds die ?

KING : Why have the prophets covered themselves in black ?

CHAMBERLAIN : They are a secret people, and look for inner meanings. There is no harm in it.

KING : They have covered themselves in black.

CHAMBERLAIN : They have not spoken of any evil thing. They have not spoken of it.

KING : If the people see the prophets covered in black they will say that the stars are against me, and believe that my luck has turned.

CHAMBERLAIN : The people must not know.

KING : Some prophet must interpret to us the doom. Let the chief prophet of the stars be sent for.

CHAMBERLAIN : (*Going towards left exit*) Summon the Chief Prophet of the stars that look on Zericon.

VOICES OFF : The Chief Prophet of the stars! The Chief Prophet of the stars!

CHAMBERLAIN : I have summoned the Chief Prophet, Majesty.

KING : If he interpret this aright I will put a necklace of turquoises round his neck, with opals from the mines.

CHAMBERLAIN : He will not fail. He is a very cunning interpreter.

KING : What if he covers himself with a huge black cloak, and does not speak, and goes muttering away, slowly with bended head, till our fear spreads to the sentries and they cry aloud?

CHAMBERLAIN : This is no doom from the stars, but some idle scribe hath written it in his insolence upon the iron door, wasting his hoard of gold.

KING : Not for myself I have a fear of doom, not for myself; but I inherited a rocky land, a windy and ill-nurtured, and nursed it to prosperity by years of peace, and spread its boundaries by years of war. I have brought up harvests out of barren acres, and given good laws unto naughty towns, and my people are happy, and lo! the stars are angry.

CHAMBERLAIN : It is not the stars, it is not the stars, Majesty, for the prophets of the stars have not interpreted it. Indeed, it was only some reveller wasting his gold.

(*Meanwhile enter CHIEF PROPHET of the stars that look on Zericon.*)

KING : Chief Prophet of the stars that look on Zericon, I would have you interpret the rhyme upon yonder door.

CHIEF PROPHET : (*Goes up to the door and reads, loquitur :*) It is from the stars.

KING : Interpret it, and you shall have great turquoises round your neck, with opals from the mines in the frozen mountains.

CHIEF PROPHET : (*Cloaks himself like the others in a great black cloak, loquitur :*) Who should wear purple in the land but a king, or who go up against the sky but he who has troubled the stars by neglecting their ancient worship?

Such a one has gone up and up, increasing power and wealth; such a one has soared above the crowns of those that went before him; such a one the stars have doomed, the undying ones, the illustrious.

(A pause.)

KING : Who wrote it ?

CHIEF PROPHET : It is pure gold. Some god has written it.

CHAMBERLAIN : Some god ?

CHIEF PROPHET : Some god whose home is among the undying stars.

1ST SENTRY : (*Aside to 2ND*) Last night I saw a star go flaming earthwards.

KING : Is this a warning, or is it a doom ?

CHIEF PROPHET : The stars have spoken.

KING : It is, then, a doom ?

CHIEF PROPHET : They speak not in jest.

KING : I have been a great king. . . . Let it be said of me, "The stars overthrew him, and they sent a god for his doom." For I have not met my equal among kings, that man should overthrow me ; and I have not oppressed my people, that man should rise up against me.

CHIEF PROPHET : It is better to give worship to the stars than to do good to man. It is better to be humble before the gods than proud in the face of your enemy, though he do evil.

KING : Let the stars hearken yet and I will sacrifice a child to them. . . . I will sacrifice a girl-child to the twinkling stars, and a male child to the stars that blink not, the stars of the steadfast eyes. (*To his spies*) Let a boy and a girl be brought for sacrifice. (*Exit a SPY, right, looking at footprints.*) Will you accept this sacrifice to the god that the stars have sent ? They say that the gods love children.

CHIEF PROPHET : I may refuse no sacrifice to the stars nor to the gods whom they send. (*To other prophets*) Make ready the sacrificial knives.

(*Prophets draw knives and sharpen them.*)

KING : Is it fitting that the sacrifice take place by the iron door

where the god from the stars has trod, or must it be in the temple ?

CHIEF PROPHET : Let it be offered by the iron door. (*To other prophets*)
Fetch hither the altar-stone.

(*The owl-like whistle is heard off right ; 3RD SPY runs crouching towards it. Exit.*)

KING : Will this sacrifice avail to avert the doom ?

CHIEF PROPHET : Who knows ?

KING : I fear that even yet the doom will fall.

CHIEF PROPHET : It were wise to sacrifice some greater thing.

KING : What more can a man offer ?

CHIEF PROPHET : His pride.

KING : What pride ?

CHIEF PROPHET : Your pride that went up against the sky and troubled the stars.

KING : How shall I sacrifice my pride to the stars ?

CHIEF PROPHET : It is upon your pride that the doom will fall, and will take away your crown and will take away your kingdom.

KING : I will sacrifice my crown and reign uncrowned amongst you, so only I save my kingdom.

CHIEF PROPHET : If you sacrifice your crown, which is your pride, and if the stars accept it, perhaps the god that they sent may avert the doom, and you may still reign in your kingdom, though humbled and uncrowned.

KING : Shall I burn my crown with spices and with incense, or cast it into the sea ?

CHIEF PROPHET : Let it be laid here by the iron door where the god came who wrote the golden doom. When he comes again by night to shrivel up the city, or to pour an enemy in through the iron door, he will see your cast-off pride, and perhaps accept it and take it away to the neglected stars.

KING : (*To CHAMBERLAIN*) Go after my spies and say that I make no sacrifice. (*Exit CHAMBERLAIN, right.*) (*Taking off his crown*) Good-bye, my brittle glory ; kings have sought you ; the stars have envied you.

(*The stage grows darker.*)

CHIEF PROPHET : Even now the sun has set who denies the stars, and the day is departed wherein no gods walk abroad. It is near the hour when spirits roam the earth and all things that go unseen, and the faces of the abiding stars will be soon revealed to the fields. Lay your crown there and let us come away. (*The KING lays his crown before the iron door.*)

KING : (*To sentries*) Go ! And let no man come near the door all night.

THE SENTRIES : (*Kneeling*) Yes, Majesty.

(*They remain kneeling until after the KING has gone.*)

(*KING and CHIEF PROPHET walk away.*)

CHIEF PROPHET : It was your pride. Let it be forgotten. May the stars accept it !

(*Exeunt, left.*)

(*The SENTRIES rise.*)

1ST SENTRY : The stars have envied him !

2ND SENTRY : It is an ancient crown. He wore it well.

1ST SENTRY : May the stars accept it !

2ND SENTRY : If they do not accept it what doom will overtake him ?

1ST SENTRY : It will suddenly be as though there were never any city of Zericon nor two sentries like you and me standing before the door.

2ND SENTRY : Why ! How do you know ?

1ST SENTRY : That is ever the way of the gods.

2ND SENTRY : But it is unjust.

1ST SENTRY : How should the gods know that ?

2ND SENTRY : Will it happen to-night ?

1ST SENTRY : Come ! we must march away.

(*Exeunt, right.*)

(*The stage grows increasingly darker. Re-enter CHAMBERLAIN, right. He walks across the stage. Exit left.*)

(*Re-enter SPIES, right. They cross the stage.*)

(*The stage is now nearly dark.*)

(*Enter BOY (right), dressed in white, his hands out a little, crying.*)

BOY : King's door ! King's door ! I want my little hoop. (*He goes up to the king's door. When he sees the king's*

crowns there he utters a satisfied Oh-h! He takes it up and puts it on the ground, and beating it before him with the sceptre, goes out by the way that he entered.)

(The great door opens, there is light within; a furtive SPY slips out, sees crown is gone. Another SPY slips out. Their crouching heads come close together.)

1ST SPY :

(Hoarse whisper) The gods have come.

(They run back through the door and the door is closed. It opens again and the KING and CHAMBERLAIN come through.)

KING :

The stars are satisfied.

CURTAIN

DUNSANY

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STUDIES & APPRECIATIONS

CHRONICLES

REVIEWS

A LIST OF RECENT BOOKS [ANNOTATED]

THE PROBLEM OF THE REPERTORY THEATRE

HASTY enthusiasm will quarrel with the paradox of this heading. For, thanks largely to the press boom, the rough hand which is laid about the scruff of every new-born art endeavour, a repertory theatre is usually regarded as *the* solution of the problem of supplying starving "provinces" with dramatic fare suited to their increasingly individual needs. That the provinces have been starving and that dramatic taste in the Northern and Midland Counties is a vastly different thing from that which nightly consults the bill of fare at the Criterion and as regularly journeys to bed replete with the naughtiness of *Oh, I say!* no one who has had any experience of the provinces either before or behind the curtain can possibly deny. This growth of individuality may be due partly to disgust at the cheap quality of the so-called "London production." Certainly we have travelled far in this respect since the days when Mr Young first took *Caste* on tour. But it is undoubtedly due also to the growth of metropolitan feeling in some of the larger industrial centres, a feeling which naturally takes exception to the shoddy goods which it is so persistently offered as substitute for the genuine article. Progress in this direction may be recorded by the fact that to-day it is possible to convert the artistic failure of Liverpool into the commercial success of Manchester, an experience that has come within the writer's own knowledge. Mr Arnold Bennett's contempt for the methods and opinions of the average theatrical manager is very clearly exemplified in this matter. For the most part out of touch with the changes in modern civilisation and certainly quite unaware of the development of a democratic conscience in these matters, the manager has been content to remain at the mercy of his booking syndicate, or, should he be so fortunate as to represent a syndicate in himself, to take for granted a provincial endorsement of the London verdict. This has sometimes been to the danger alike of his own pocket and of the continued existence of the theatre habit amongst the more intelligent and more desirable classes of playgoers. And it was precisely this problem of dissatisfaction and a coincident falling-off in the receipts that the repertory movement set itself to solve. Unfortunately, the effort to solve by one method two problems which are

separate and quite distinct seems like to prove too much for the existing repertory theatres. The consequent failure which may ensue would be disastrous to the whole cause of theatre reform, more far-reaching in its results than the present deplorable reaction from the drama of ideas in London. Here we seem to be waiting in idleness, or amusing ourselves by dusting the household gods (what matter though they be chipped and tawdry!) exploiting the quaintest fustian and rag-tag and bobtail "dramatics," whilst the dramatists are gone in search of new beauties with which to replace the cold brilliance of the Idea Incarnate. (Mr Bernard Shaw may take this to signify a deity and he the deification.)

The great crime of the press boom is that it can so easily lull the public conscience asleep, most easily in those less tangible matters which have to do with the national responsibilities towards Art. It is because there is a resultant slackening of interest and effort in those towns which already have their repertory theatres and a tendency on the part of other towns to organise precisely similar institutions under a mistaken belief in their complete success that the considerate plain-speaking which is the purpose of this article seems to be justified.

The repertory theatre as we know it in this country is not a complete success. Its attention is divided; that is fatal in Art. On the one hand, there is the laudable desire to do good work and to raise the artistic standards of the ignored "provinces." On the other hand, there is the constant fear of the Box Office, the dread lest the theatre should not be popular. The Box Office is indeed a delicate child. How many, many times a day does its temperature have to be taken! How many times a year does a specialist in the shape of "the latest London success" need to be called in! It is quite impossible for a theatre wishing to do new work to become popular before it has made either its reputation for that work or an audience to appreciate the reputation. And in the making of that reputation to how many diseases may not our favourite child be subjected! At the approach of the first symptoms of debility the niggardliness of the public in art matters compels us to desert our reading and our dreams of further composition and to hasten to the bedside of the languishing infant.

Here, then, we have the two problems which the repertory movement is trying to solve by one method. And it is this clashing of interests that is killing the good effects of a work too hastily conceived though none the less eagerly begun. It is impossible to hold consistently to one art policy if the

attention of the director, or directors, of the enterprise is constantly diverted to the recurring necessity of producing fustian plays without any belief in their real worth. The violent tonic may indeed cause the pulse of the Box Office to bound again, but a wrecked artistic programme, a confused public, and an almost indefinite prolongation of the day of "reputation's reward" are the penalties. A scrutiny of the other problem speedily convinces us that the man in the street is right when he says that the repertory theatre is not a commercial proposition. Of course it cannot be. (True, the average opinion takes no count of the repertory theatre of long standing, its foundations of pioneer work well and truly laid. That is a different aspect of the matter which will be dealt with later). The necessity of producing a new play each week entails a large company of artists and a weekly production-charge. Because of the greater variety of parts and the constant strain of rehearsal it follows that the company must be larger than any one of average size which is sent on tour with one play. The fact that the production-charge is a weekly one must not be lost sight of. The cost of a play, then, becomes a matter of much greater relative importance than it would be if each play were to enjoy a run or tour of, let us say, twelve weeks. Again, side by side with the necessity for greater stage efficiency, the auditorium of the repertory theatre needs to be smaller than its commercial neighbour's if the attempt to rediscover intimacy is not to be entirely abandoned. All these facts go to prove that a repertory theatre, so far from being an economy, is an expense. That the enjoyment of the whole of the profits, when there are any, as opposed to the system of divided spoil which obtains in the touring theatre, does not compensate for this additional expenditure is conclusive proof that the repertory theatre is more expensive to run than the theatre royal next door. This should afford evidence of the folly of abandoning artistic principle in the endeavour to achieve that contradiction in terms, the commercial-artistic (or "repertory") theatre.

From what has been written above it follows that the immediate problem of such an institution is not an artistic one, but rather one of finance and organisation. This is a reversal of the proper order of things. For the first concern of an art enterprise should be with its art. The experience of other arts and of other countries in this particular one should show that the commercial reward will assuredly come later. The writer was much impressed by a recent conversation with the secretary of the Moscow Art Theatre, M. Lykiardopulos, who explained that it took his theatre nine years of

pioneer work at heavy financial loss to secure the present yearly profit of about ten thousand pounds.* But the British Public always clamours for profit at the outset. There is no attempt to soften the blow by saying, How soon will it pay? An immediate safe 5 per cent. is the comforting assurance most sought after by the hesitating art patron, "I'm not worrying about the plays. They'll be all right!" The soul of the artist sinks within him when he hears these things, for he knows perfectly well that his theatre is doomed before even the foundation-stone be laid. When one regards the close critical appreciation of the best continental audiences, their anxiety—almost acute, so real is it—lest their theatre should cease to grapple with its artistic problems effectually, and then observes the comparative aimlessness of even an English repertory audience, its lack of culture, ignorance of tradition, and inability or want of desire to speculate as to how such and such a masterpiece will be handled, one is tempted to resign oneself to a final pessimism.

The English Repertory Theatre is engrossed with the problems of organisation and finance. The artistic problem comes second. How to manage with fewer artists? Where to find plays with shorter casts? Will this play pay? Can I find three indifferent plays to pay for one conscientious effort before Christmas? These are the most pressing questions with the English repertory manager. They should be secondary considerations. His primary anxieties should be: Is the theatre maintaining the standards set forth at the beginning? Is our company strong enough? Dare we attempt a production of *Hamlet*? Is Miss So-and-So ready yet for *Nora*? and so forth. In Manchester, thanks to her own pluck, Miss Horniman has been enabled to set up certain standards, some good, but all less firm, less constantly maintained than would have been possible had that courageous lady received either from one or more private individuals or from the municipality the financial endowment which is her undoubted due. Such productions as *The Silver Box* (first time), *Strife*, *Hindle Wakes*, *Justice*, have quite readjusted the critical standards of the provinces. And that there is already a Manchester school of dramatists, owing its existence to Miss Horniman, is high testimony to the value of a theatre's work. It is an achievement only possible by adherence to one's Idea; and this again is impossible without some measure of relief from immediate financial exigencies in early days.

* Even so this profit is almost entirely made out of the tour of the important towns of Russia which is undertaken annually.

The Glasgow and Liverpool theatres differ somewhat from the Manchester enterprise in that they are both controlled by Boards of Directors who are responsible to shareholders. Neither of these theatres has achieved the success of Miss Horniman's concern. This may be due in a small measure to the fact that they are of more recent date, but the main cause is in the more immediate necessity they have been under of allying two conflicting ideas. From the commencement of their troubled existence there has been a constant oscillation between the two poles of achievement : the positive pole of a good banking account, and the negative pole of an artistic record without tarnish. In spite of the philosophies of conflict, this is not good in Art. The comparative lack of success is due also to the difficulty of persuading directors, though they be gifted public men or directors of public companies, of the necessity for the adoption of a precisely opposite point of view from that taken upon the knotty question of the sale of top-boots to North American Indians or the laying of tram-tracks across the Grampians. This is an impossible feat of mental gymnastics, anyway. Therefore business men should be banished wholesale from the position of directors of an artistic theatre, and their places given to persons who could be known as "finance regulators," or by any such descriptive Americanism as may occur to the fertile mind. In Glasgow there seemed hardly any definite vision of the theatre as the embodiment of a clear Idea. The choice of plays was largely indiscriminate and born of immediate circumstances, either of finance, adventitious enterprise, or mere expediency. The Liverpool theatre is better in this respect. There has been considerable success there with the production of modern-comedy ; and efforts, largely crippled for want of funds, have been made, though at great self-sacrifice on the theatre's part, towards the achievement of an elucidatory and distinctive method of handling poetry on the stage. The spasmodic efforts of such places as Croydon and Sheffield are entirely without lasting result, unless it be to arouse sufficient enthusiasm for the creation of permanent institutions, in which case it is to be hoped that the promoters will realise and avoid the pitfalls and build worthily. Certainly a short season of six weeks or more, fostered probably by a system of forced booking (coupons, serial tickets, etc.), can set up no standards either of criticism or of taste.

The Birmingham Repertory Theatre is the latest arrival amongst the permanent institutions ; and it is the most promising. This may be its youth. But it has also certain advantages over its predecessors. A body of people

who have started in the humblest fashion—performances were given at first in a private drawing-room—and have been content to learn together the rudiments of their art, have a solid foundation of experience which the more forced growth of the other repertories prohibits, to their great disadvantage. It is in this quiet manner that the great Moscow Art Theatre had its beginning. In Birmingham they are unhampered either by pecuniary necessity or by a complicated system of directorial control. It is true that much of their present work is crude, almost amateur; but it is never slovenly. Improvement is just a matter of time. There is but one ultimate head of the concern, and upon him devolves the responsibility of making good the artistic policy of his theatre—the only business system possible for any art theatre.

There are no repertory theatres in this country to-day. That is to say, there is no theatre with means enough, a large enough stage, and a sufficiently numerous company to enable it to change its programme two or three times a week throughout the year. Some of the existing repertory theatres have made a courageous attempt to break down their audiences' prejudice in favour of the week-to-week habit engendered by the touring system, but financial reasons have compelled an early abandonment of this "election cry." *

However, a criticism of a movement with which the writer is in complete sympathy that gives no suggestive hints for a better future is a little unfair. To begin with, then, the ideal repertory theatre would have a repertory, and thus justify its existence under such a title. It would not attempt to produce more than one new play a month, if as many. The greater amount of time available would admit of more care in their choice and mounting than is possible under the present scrambling week-to-week system. Its programme would, of course, be catholic; so much so that the nonsensical question, What is a repertory play? would cease to exist. The theatre should have the humblest beginnings, for it is only by these means that the solid foundations of experience and an audience trained in the tradition of that experience may be realised. Without a consistently maintained policy, it would be impossible so to make good the artistic reputation of this theatre

* Both the Liverpool and Birmingham theatres have made attempts in this direction. Birmingham has been more successful because it is less dependent on the Box Office. There the recent experiment of a Shakespeare repertoire week by the permanent company proved most successful.

that it becomes that thing of tradition which is a vital bond between the theatre and its established audience.* To secure such a policy, divided control of the things which govern it must be totally abolished.

The ideal repertory theatre must be fairly treated in the matter of money. By this it is not meant that it should receive such a heavy endowment as to entirely free it from the cares of existence. The great risk of a consequent archaic and academical institution should banish that thought. But it should have a fine, worthy house of its own, with room enough to fashion its own materials, to provide reasonable comfort for its workers (a library, a gymnasium, a café: the old theory that we may expect of the actor refined and sensitive work irrespective of the squalor of his surroundings, is base), and a second stage upon which to conduct additional rehearsals and for use as a training-school for its students. This civic theatre, self-respecting, triumphing over those problems which are vital to its art, holding the regard of the community in an easy captivity; the theatre that the dream of M. Nemirowitch-Dantchenko has achieved for Moscow, cannot exist without financial help in its earliest years. This is made clear by an unbiased study of present achievement in the English movement. Whilst there is much to be said against municipal endowment because of the great danger to the theatre of losing touch with the vital interests of its day and because also of the flagrant ignorance and Paul Pry behaviour which would be displayed by the butchers and bakers of the neighbourhood in the control of its affairs, there is nothing to be said against the partial endowment to be obtained by a regular subscription-list. This subscription-list should follow the gift of a sufficient building, rent-free, from one or more private or semi-public donors who are content to give their patronage at the cost of any secret love of experimentation they may possess. The members or organisers of such a subscription might have some voice in control over the number and character of the plays for which they were asked to subscribe. This would secure some contact between the management of the theatre and the patrons. At one time the writer believed that an elaborate system of public ownership might secure, by reason of the large number of shareholders involved, just that amount of endowment which has been shown to be necessary in order to place the artistic Idea out

* Every repertory theatre should have a training-school of its own. It is impossible to depend upon a spasmodic system of recruiting for the maintenance of the supply of the right kind of artist. Moreover, the director of the theatre can then be sure that the traditions he has set up will be consistently upheld by all the actors of his company.

of reach of a timorous executive. But experience seems to show that, unless a theatre can weave itself into the chain of daily necessities by means of the humble beginnings previously advocated, the average man regards his duty done when he has tendered the smallest of bank-notes in payment for a parcel of shares which he does not want and in which—rightly from one point of view—he does not believe. “If it had not been for So-and-So, I shouldn’t have taken the things.” Obviously such a system of subscription must fail. The necessary endowment, therefore, must come either from subscription for seats for a series of plays about to be produced or from private gift. In the event of the latter it must not be so large as to stultify the life-effort of the enterprise. The unlikelihood of such an excess of generosity is exemplified by the notorious meanness of the English attitude towards Art. Outside the circle of Fashion where indifferent Art may sometimes receive extortionate encouragement the measure of the artist’s successful existence is the measure of his money-making capacity. With true wealth the English point of view will have nothing to do. This is fatal to the English repertory movement. The tragedy of its neglect is increased by reason of the enthusiasm of its workers. Never before, one supposes, has there been such an enthusiastic body of workers in the English theatre. Actors, authors, and designers alike seem awake to the new possibilities of their art. Impatiently they sit waiting for the sustenance to begin a work that, regarded across the view of centuries, may seem as fleeting, as unimportant as the daily life of a butterfly, but which yet may leave behind it a lasting vision of beauty. How different from the country in which flourishes a theatre of more than three hundred workers, with an annual expenditure of one hundred thousand pounds and a history of ten years of patient striving after success!

It comes then to a question of fundamentals. The true English Repertory Theatre, when it does arrive, will begin its work slowly. It will concern itself first with its own intrinsic art problems, satisfied with a humble start in life like any other child of man, and confident of the ultimate reward which eventually and always is allotted to reputation made. Out of its success in these matters will come the solution of that other problem of the declining audience.

BASIL DEAN

FRANCIS THOMPSON *

"THE critic, it is to be supposed," wrote Francis Thompson, "feels much the same delicacy in praising a live poet as in eulogising a man to his face : when the poet goes out of the room, so to speak, and the door of the tomb closes behind him, the too sensitive critic breathes freely, and finds vent for his suppressed admiration. For at least thirty years criticism has unburdened its suppressed feelings about Coleridge, which it considerably spared him while he was alive." The rule implied in these ironic remarks is of pretty general application. It has not always applied to good poets who have lived to what is called a ripe old age ; and it does not apply to certain bad poets, of whom there is a sort of apostolic succession, each figure in the line getting great praise when he is alive and being entirely forgotten after he is dead. But it does generally apply to great poets of all degrees ; and it has certainly been valid in Thompson's case. His first book of poems in the early nineties attracted some attention, and was well praised by a few critics of more than usual temerity and insight ; but his vogue did not increase during his life-time, and at the time of his death it was obvious, from the length and character of his obituary notices, that knowledge of his work was anything but widespread. Then what some publicists call "the time-lag" worked ; the *Selected Poems* were issued, and the public woke up to find Thompson famous ; and now, only six years after Thompson's death, an expensive collected edition is brought out, long-winded eulogies (of which, I take it, this is going to be one) tumble over each other in the Press, and several thousand sets are sold in a few weeks.

Why, in this particular case, did it take the poet so long to obtain proper recognition ? This particular case was precisely like all the other cases. The unfortunate devil, like all poets whose work can last, had a personality, a style, a craftsmanship of his own ; and, in accordance with precedent, the very qualities by virtue of which he claims his poetic rank were considered as affectations. Every new and personal style is by nine critics out of ten called affected, until a term of years has passed, when it compels recognition and is thenceforward used as a stick with which to beat new-comers. It is

* *The Collected Works of Francis Thompson*. Vol. I. and II. Poetry ; Vol. III. Prose. Burns & Oates. 6s. net each.

no good complaining of the thing. There is no cure for original blindness. Poetic genius will always have to force itself on the world ; and even if critics (like the critics of painting) grow frightened by past experiences and dread an immortality like that of Gifford and Jeffrey, they will still select for praise meretricious and hollow things that are really affected and when they come across the real thing say to themselves, "Why, damn it all, we can at least be certain that this stuff isn't great."

But there was less to get accustomed to in Thompson than in most. His "views" were as old as the hills, or at any rate as Christianity ; and there was nothing very unusual about his matter or his "message." The critic could not feel, as he did in the case of Wordsworth, that here was a man telling him to go and put his head in a cloud ; nor did Thompson, as Browning did, irritate him by making references that he could not understand or give him brain-fag with plots he could not follow. It is untrue that Thompson was merely Crashaw redivivus ; but it is true that the seventeenth century would rarely have found his subjects or his sentiments unfamiliar. Thompson did not attempt to explore new continents of nature or of the mind. Any man who knew his Crashaw, his Vaughan, and his Herbert could come to Thompson's "mental atmosphere" as to an accustomed place. But the worst of it was that many people thought that everything good in him had been borrowed from the seventeenth century ; that he was a mere imitator, whose sole private contribution to his work was a most pernicious habit of using long and often incomprehensible words of Latin origin. He did use such words ; he did use archaic words ; he did heap his pages with images as no modern poet has done ; and he did frequently use verse-forms that have not been much in fashion for two hundred years. He owed an immense debt to the older religious writers ; but he had native powers which would have made him a poet had he never read a line of them. He borrowed from no one, nor could he have borrowed, his power of projecting the colour of his mind upon the material world, his astonishing capacity (as illustrated, for instance, in "Her Portrait") for exact analysis of intangible things, his fertile grasp of analogies, his great though not faultless feeling for the majesty and the music of words alone and in combination, and his genius for the rhythm that is more than the garment of poetry—

Whose speech Truth knows not from her thought,
Nor Love her body from her soul.

It is impossible in this space to examine Thompson's qualities, or to do more than celebrate with a brief and formal utterance the issue of Mr Meynell's beautiful memorial volumes. But, since so much has been made of the comparison, it may not be pointless to quote from the *Metaphysicals* and from Thompson a few passages as nearly parallel as they can be found. The first thing that must strike any one who reads them together is that passages of outstanding splendour are far fewer in the older poets than in Thompson. He has nothing more magnificent than that great address of Crashaw's to St. Teresa beginning—

O thou undaunted daughter of desires—

but he is at his best far oftener than Crashaw and his fellows. The next thing that strikes one is that, when it comes to a comparison of specific poems, the resemblances of detail between Thompson and his predecessors tend to disappear and the differences—differences made by a new personality and by the passage of two hundred years—tend to become accentuated. Take, for instance, Thompson's "A Fallen Yew." Superficially it looks archaic. The stanza has a seventeenth-century appearance; there is an archaic look about such phrases as—

For this firm yew did from the vassal leas
And rain and air, its tributaries,
Its revenues increase,

And levy impost on the golden sun.

But here is Vaughan on "The Timber":

Sure thou didst flourish once! and many springs,
Many bright mornings, much dew, many showers
Pass'd o'er thy head; many light hearts and wings,
Which now are dead, lodg'd in thy living bowers.

But thou beneath the sad and heavy line
Of death dost waste, all senseless, cold, and dark;
Where not so much as dreams of light may shine,
Nor any thought of greenness, leaf or bark.

And here Thompson on "A Fallen Yew.":

It seemed corral of the world's great prime
Made to un-edge the scythe of Time,
And last with stateliest rhyme.

Stirred by its fall—poor destined bark of Dis !
Along my soul a bruit there is
Of echoing images,

Reverberations of mortality ;
Spelt backward from its death, to me
Its life reads saddenedly.

Its breast was hollowed as the tooth of eld ;
And boys, there creeping unbeheld,
A laughing moment dwelled.

Yet they, within its very heart so crept,
Reached not the heart that courage kept,
With winds and years beswept.

And in its boughs did close and kindly nest
The birds, as they within its breast,
By all its leaves caressed.

But bird nor child might touch by any art
Each other's or the tree's hid heart,
A whole God's breadth apart ;

The breadth of God, the breadth of death and life ! . . .

Take again Crashaw " In Cicatrices Domini Jesu " :

Come, brave soldiers, come and see
Mighty Love's artillery.
This was the conquering dart, and lo,
There shines his quiver, there his bow.
These the passive weapons are
That made great Love a man of war.
The quiver that he bore did bide
So near, it prov'd his very side. . . .

And take " The Veteran of Heaven," by Thompson :

O Captain of the wars, whence won Ye so great scars ?
In what fight did Ye smite, and what manner was the foe ?
Was it on a day of rout they compassed Thee about,
Or gat Ye these adornings when Ye wrought their overthrow ?

'Twas on a day of rout they girded Me about,
They wounded all My brow, and they smote Me through the side ;
My hand held no sword when I met their armed horde,
And the conqueror fell down, and the Conquered bruised his pride.

In the end, in fact, one comes to the conclusion that the real foundations

of the charge of being a mere resurrector that has been levelled against Thompson are (a) that he had a large, unfashionable vocabulary, (b) that he adhered to an unfashionable religion, (c) that the religion and a portion of the vocabulary were properties also found attached to certain of the older writers.

It would be superfluous in this journal to give quotations from Thompson's finest and best-known poems. "The Hound of Heaven," "Her Portrait," "Sister Songs," "The Poppy," the "Ode to the Setting Sun," and "The Dead Cardinal" are familiar to everybody who has read the old volumes. Of the many new poems printed in this issue none exhibited Thompson's powers in a new light, but some are very beautiful. "To Daisies" ranks with the best of the shorter poems previously published. It begins :

Ah, drops of gold in whitening flame
Burning, we know your lovely name—
Daisies, that little children pull !
Like all weak things, over the strong
Ye do not know your power for wrong,
And much abuse your feebleness.
Weak maids, with flutter of a dress,
Increase most heavy tyrannies ;
And vengeance unto heaven cries
For multiplied injustice of dove-eyes.
Daisies, that little children pull,
As ye are weak, be merciful !
O hide your eyes ! they are to me
Beautiful insupportably.
Or be but conscious ye are fair,
And I your loveliness could bear ;
But, being fair so without art,
Ye vex the silted memories of my heart !

The "Carmen Genesis," again, in the roar of its marching music, the sublime audacity of its images, and the loftiness of its thought is Thompson at his greatest. Characteristically, after the splendid song of the making of heaven and earth, he ends on the personal note, face to face with his Maker :

God ! if not yet the royal siege
Of Thee, my terrible sweet Liege,
Hath shook my soul to fall ;
If 'gainst Thy great investment still
Some broken bands of rebel Will
Do man the desperate wall ;

Yet, yet, Thy graciousness ! I tread,
All quick, through tribes of moving dead—
Whose life's a sepulchre
Sealed with the dull stone of a heart
No angel can roll round. I start,
Thy secrets lie so bare !

With beautiful importunacy
All things plead " We are fair ! " To me
Thy world's a morning haunt,
A bride whose zone no man hath slipt
But I, with baptism still bedrift
Of the prime water's font.

Here we have the essential Thompson, the man at war with himself. This self-consciousness before God is evident all through his work. An ascetic for the sake of his art, he allowed himself the one excess of the worship of beauty, and even as he made his most exquisite and recondite images his inner voice asked whether—

Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossoming twist
I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist—

were not snares and delusions.

Can it be his alone,
To find, when all is known,
That what
He solely sought

Is lost, and thereto lost
All that its seeking cost ?
That he
Must finally,

Through sacrificial tears,
And anchoretic years,
Tryst
With the sensualist ?

So ask ; and if they tell
The secret terrible,
Good friend,
I pray thee send

Some high gold embassy
To teach my unripe age.
Tell !
Lest my feet walk hell.

There may be found in Francis Thompson an immense range of musical expression and an inexhaustible variety of image. The most superficial reader must get pleasure from such phrases as—

As the labouring moon, which nothing does but shine,
Moves all the labouring surges of the world ;

and such stanzas as—

The breaths of kissing night and day
Were mingled in the eastern Heaven :
Throbbing with unheard melody
Shook Lyra all its star-chord seven :
When dusk shrunk cold, and light trod shy,
And dawn's grey eyes were troubled grey ;
And souls went palely up the sky,
And mine to Lucidé.

But no one who merely regards him as a storehouse of cunning artifice and rare metaphorical gems can grasp the real primary important thing about Thompson : and this is that, like all great poets, he was a man first and a poet afterwards. No dilettante ever collected so many rarities as he, but he was nothing of the dilettante. No linguistic decorator ever equalled him in the strangeness and multitude of his images ; but it is impossible to find a poem of Thompson's where these things are the main reason of the work's existence. They are always subordinate and subsequent to a solid central core of profoundly felt emotion and hard thought. Had Thompson given the world less it might have admired him more ; had he taken fewer pains to invest his work with a rich and complex beauty his sincerity, his spiritual force, and the illumination of the mind he directed over the whole visible and invisible universe would have been more easily seen. Fortunately, he is at last attaining his due position. We can be certain that, for what immortality on the tongues of mortal men is worth, he is secure of it ; and that, as long as our language is read his voice—not a voice so mighty as that of some English poets, but a voice very individual in its articulation and very searching in its musical blend of melancholy and joy—will be as familiar to many people as the voice of a living man.

J. C. SQUIRE

CHRONICLES

CURRENT ENGLISH POETRY

THE YELLOW PATCH

I

THIS Chronicle is being written (or at any rate begun) on the top of a hill—on one of those skulls of scalped rock, abrupt faces of stone, that start up in the north to look south, over England, over the dinted, tinted, patterned spread of turf and town ;—and though it was only accident that brought me here, yet (like all accidentals, really, if one had only luck and sense to live sincerely) the place has an absolute aptness—for it is up to just such a peak that these Chronicles, regularly, ought to swing the imagination of the reader,—giving him a glimpse of the kingdoms of poetry in a few moments of time : the gleaming fields, the fresh allotments, the little hurrying, eager figures ; the swathe of colour twisting and biting into the moorland beyond ; the threads of traffic that suck its brightness to the cities. And they ought to seek to do this not simply for the sake of giving him the hang of the whole thing, of showing him how the fields fit and interlock ; but rather for the purpose of bringing out the brisk diversities and making him realise the poets as a lot of independent, mortal units. He ought to see them as specific specks, as mere hard-working humans ; we want immensely to flatten out Parnassus. For Poetry has been looked up to far too long ; it is time the reader looked down on it : nothing is doing its dignity more damage than the palsyng superstition that it is something excessively sublime. The reader picks out his prose-men, he is familiar with philosophers ; but the moment he mentions verse he remembers the proprieties : up go his eyes and down droops his voice ; and, from what is no doubt just a nice, natural desire to do nothing offensive to refinement, he invariably speaks of the specially simple, jolly, frank, and friendly souls who make it as though they were a race of wilted priests. Whereas, in reality, of course, they are, of all writers, exactly the men whom it is most needful to see as human beings : for, of all forms of writ-

ing, theirs is the most personal, intimate, instinctive—poetry being, after all, simply essence of utterance—speech with the artifice left out. Doubly wrong, therefore, this mock-reverence; bad for readers and writers, breeding an unfamiliarity which is the worst sort of contempt; and one of POETRY AND DRAMA's first tasks ought to be its destruction. It must preach a gay impiety—insist that songs are meant for singing—declare that the only certain sacrilege is awe. And perhaps one of the soundest ways of doing that would be to show the men among their books, make these trimonthly birds'-eye-views of verse so many scenes of human effort, with living figures, very mortal, very practical and muddy, engrossed in the grubby, glorious work of growing flowers.

And this Quarter, as it happens, if but the right Chronicler were here, such an effort might be made with special justness—for right in the foreground, flashing superbly, easily the top-note of the scene, gleams a patch that not only plucks the reader's sight instantly, and is not only specially quick with human drama, but that is also an absolutely unequalled demonstration of the impertinence of piety, of the irreverence of awe, of the treachery of treating Poetry too devoutly. *The Daffodil Fields* (as this golden plot is called) would in any case indeed have first attention: for it has been the success of the season—crowds flock towards it still—workers from every corner of the colony are still studying it: not only is it more popular than even the new Kipling, it is also far fuller of technical omens than *Auguries*. Everywhere else, as it happens, the main work done has been autumnal: collected poems from A. E., collected poems from Mr Kipling, collected poems from Mr Ford Madox Hueffer, a late last sheaf, very delicate—autumn, alas, indeed—from the once so fertile field of Mr Symons: a general gleaning instead of a breaking of new ground; and in the midst of all this tidiness, these confirmations and composures, this sudden gush of April sings out well. But apart from this mere accident, it has its high importance. It does light up the whole landscape rather oddly. For it is the work of a man intensely typical of our time, a man who stands, to his own hurt, precisely at the point where two traditions—one ascending, one alighting—cross their strains; and to assay this patch of gold is to discover a formula as medicinal as any mountain-view—and one that explains, above everything, why it is that you always write ugliness when you spell Beauty with a capital B.

II

And first, as to its sub-soil. For not only do the leaves of a man's early books make a kind of mould from which the later ones spring ; but they often tell us the instinctive bent of his mind—their very imitativeness betrays his native ideals. Now Masfield's books form four strata. The top layer is the series of long narrative poems of which *The Daffodil Fields* is the last. Below these is the stretch of prose novels and plays, from *Nan* to *The Street of To-day*. Below these again is a rich deposit of uncollected criticism, of miscellaneous prose work, and of two volumes (*A Mainsail Haul* and *A Tarpaulin Muster*), which use prose more deliberately, with a self-conscious art—volumes whose contents really were, literally, "essays." And lastly there is the little lode of early verse.

This early verse is very fascinating. Exhumed now, a trifle tarnished, it is like a cache of buried treasure : the two little volumes are caskets full of trinkets made of trinkets, a little hoard of coins and gems, doubloons and precious stones, gathered on clandestine raids and then cunningly re-set.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Clandestine—because, buried with them, is a solemn declaration that the purpose of the store was purely altruistic,—an italicised, insistent "Consecration."

*Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years,—
Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in with the spears. . . .
The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired look-out.
Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.*

Amen.

Such a reckless admission of a close acquaintance with Mr Kipling might seem to argue sincerity, yet it becomes pretty plain, as you turn the verses over, that it was the vividness of the violence that really attracted him, that he stuck to his bo'suns and buccaneers simply out of love of their loot : that it was out of the topazes and emeralds and gold moidores that his songs were really fashioned. A craving for bright things, small things

—things vivid, tense and shapely—for single stars, single notes, gems, colours like enamels, pictures like the little pictures in missals, and flowers like those that burn on embroideries—that is plainly the human motive here. The best of these verses are those that chime gaily, jewelled in every action, merely pretending to commemorate rude deeds. The worst are those written from a solemn sense of serving beauty. Remembering his sacred office, remembering this is poetry, he seems to gulp back the lilt, heave the Celtic sigh, thin the measure out with dummy notes :

The tick of the blood is settling slow, my heart will soon be still,
And ripe and ready am I for rest in the grave atop of the hill ;
So gather me up and lay me down, for ready and ripe am I
For the weary vigil with sightless eyes that may not see the sky.

It is pure superstition, of course : the tick isn't " settling slow," at all—it can distinctly be heard beneath the arbitrary drone, a second metre incompletely overlaid. It betrays the truth to us now—that Masefield was no more ready and ripe than a skylark about to ascend, that the real tune in his head was *rum-tiddle-tum*, and that he padded it out with an extra *tum* out of decorum.

So that already it would have been possible to deduce that we had here a man with (a) a keen belief in life's kindling picturesqueness, (b) a firm resolve to render it worthily, (c) an imaginative love for compactness and vividness, for exact, ringing, minute images and sounds, and (d) a special power of dwelling on memories and ideas until he compressed them into small bright cusps and crystals, and of then setting these pellets rhythmically circling in a little silvery setting of sound. But who (e) was sometimes prevented, by veneration for his medium, from giving full expression to his eagerness by heating up and hammering down with all his power.

III

And such a man would naturally abandon verse for prose. His instincts would dumbly urge it—for this reverence balked them. And his theory of an elevating vulgarity would provide a prompt excuse—for prose, with its familiarities and universal right of entry, can offer many advantages to an artist bent on being Whitmanly. Theoretically, therefore, *A Mainsail Haul* (the first prose-book—a series of sketches in sailor slang, a sort of simpler "Sailors Three ") may be said to represent an upright attempt to

fulfil the terms of that "Consecration" contract more completely. But practically it turned out very different. Instincts are not so easily battened down. Nature will have her way. And this attempt to pay honour to the slang of the sea was unconsciously but a covert way of catching a new literary device, of bringing a new beauty into prose music, and of providing Masfield's mind with a mode of utterance, absolutely new, perfectly fitted to his intensely personal vision. It is one of the most interesting pieces of involuntary self-discovery in recent letters. It is even more impressive than Synge's "call" to Aran. Watch it working in these two examples:

Now close by where he stood there was a sort of a great store, kept by a Johnny Dago. And if I were to tell you of the things they had in it, I would need nine tongues and an oiled hinge to each of them. But Billy walked into this store, into the space inside, into like the 'tween decks, for to have a look about him before buying. And there were great bunches of bananas a-ripening against the wall. And sacks of dried raisins, and bags of dried figs, and melon-seeds, and pomegranates enough to sink you. Then there were cotton bales, and calico, and silk of Persia. And rum in puncheons, and bottled ale. And all manner of sweets, and a power of a lot of chemicals.

Then there were lamps and candles, and knives and nutmeg-graters. Bowls there were, painted with twisty-twirls. And flutes from the tombs, and whistles that looked like flower-pots. Also fiddles and beautiful melodeons. There were cages full of parrots, both green and grey; and white cockatoos on perches a-nodding their red crests; and Java love-birds a-billing, and parakeets a-screaming, and little kittens for the ships with the rats. And last of all there was a little monkey, chained to a sack of jib-hanks, who sat upon his tail a-grinning.

That is from "A Sailor's Yarn." Its object will be evident. It would do for the special speech of real sailors, with its repetitions, coils, and verbal hitches, its zest in circumstantial recollection, what Synge had been doing for the speech of the Aran islanders. What it was actually on the track of was a new prose rhythm, an absolutely new prose trick—the very technique the artist needed for himself:

He helped her up the mount to the top. She stayed there, holding to a tree, facing to the sun with shut eyes. The sun was dipping now. His red disc was cut across by threads of intense gold cloud. The west was orange. Under the west, the landscape's watery grey was luminous. The hills on the horizon were dim butterfly blue. The three pines on Ponton Wood bronzed and sombred. They were captains there, Roman captains, bloody from the conquest. A few faint clouds rose above the colour of the lowest heaven. Water in the valley gleamed steel. Smoke rose above the village. Woods were dim. The world was unreal with haze. Only in this high place the glow unconquered. It flushed the trees still. They reddened under it. Ponton was an ember glowing.

When April was at her loveliest there came a day of rain. The rain filled the little spring at the southern end of the quarry. The spring bubbled up, stirring the sand-grains with its trembles. It rilled past the rush-clump, past the ooze where the marigolds sucked. With a cluck and colour it slid across a quartz, loitered in bubbles below, bobbed round, curtsied and continued. It rippled away, cleaving through the grasses, in all the perpetual miracle of an April brook. A bramble had fallen across it. It sent it ducking up and down, bright with wet. It drove sodden leaves, and a

twig with a lime crust on it, against the bramble. A pool spread, curdling with scum, yeasty near the bramble, like working ale. Then on. Then on. Over a run of pebbles it glugged and tinkled. The leap and collapse of the run of the water on the stone is a continual miracle. The change and interchange, the sudden smooth of the glide, cold, brown, glassy, bursting into bubbles, twinkling into dapples, gold suddenly, instantly blue or brown, a jobble, a plowter, a collapse, always a rush, a hurry, always deliberate, pausing, circling, making up its mind, headlong at last, anon quiet, menacing even, secret.

Those are from *The Street of To-day*. The reader will see what has happened. It is the same tune, the same tempo; and the same sailor's mode of cataloguing, item by item, made to serve the writer's own brain. It is a kind of passionate reporting, a logic of vision. It works minutely, with tiny details; then makes them magnificent by rhythm. The reader's mind progresses strictly, every step a statement, and yet it is roused and uplifted as by rhetoric. The periods rattle like drum-taps. The small bright pictures flash intensely. There is something hypnotic in the recurrent tick and flash. A kind of trance exalts the onlooker, he tastes the cleansing power of vision, he is granted the happiness of illusion perfectly fulfilled.

And this percussive, pointillist, exact and stabbing way of writing is so extraordinarily successful, simply because it excites, summons, and employs at their keenest pitch all Masfield's powers of apprehension. The beat of this music is the very step of his mind. It is the exact oral equivalent of that optical greed for a bead-like lucidity and brightness which filled his early books with doubloons, gems, moidores. It is Masfield's way of realising the world, of expressing it to himself. He has to clutch and grip it to make sure of it; he has to resolve life into little pellets and reduce ideas to tense images. The sense of safety these things yield him is the secret of the fascination which all small pellucid things have had for his art: bubbles, eddies, notes of music, script, maps, the ticking of a clock, mouse-scamperings. It is this that dots so many of his pages with a kind of dogma. "Vitality is shown by capacity for thought." "Science is the art of the twentieth century." "Any resolute endurance of life is comforting to the perplexed." They are to be thought of more as diagrams than epigrams. It is his love of particularity that makes him generalise. It is the something neatly gnomish in the result that makes him gnomish. Sentences like these are probably due to a desperate clutch, a kind of nervousness, far more than any desire to be oracular.

For it is perfectly possible that this queer keenness of apprehension is due to a kind of apprehensiveness. That sailor's doting love of solid detail,

from which this method was derived, is itself a symptom of a state of dispossession, and it is possible that these sentences owe their determined definition to a pressure made convulsive by uncertainty. But, with the awful inhumanity of reading, we do not let that depress us. For if this is the case, then fear has brought us something that courage lacked the energy to conquer. These short sentences may be written gaspingly, but they reach us like commands. They rap out authoritatively, they kindle, reassure. They are sentences in the court-room sense: they deliver judgment and pass on; and the quick pulse seems the panting beat of splendid swiftmess.

Our man, in short, had invented, by a kind of accident, a verbal machine that applied all his energies creatively—using them to stamp a pattern on knowledge, to give reality design, and to mint memories into talismans that gave the rest of us courage, so bright and clear and certain was their form. But it still remained for him to apply it to the brutal boulder of the world. It had worked wonderfully in brief essays, in the romantic studies of *A Tarpaulin Muster*; would it work when he fed into it the unselected stuff of modern life: would this snapping die-stamp sort of technique make a novel?

IV

Captain Margaret; *Multitude and Solitude*; *The Street of To-day*: these were the successive results of this larger application. Each is better than the last; and though even the third has its weakness, it is reassuring to realise its nature. For the special weakness of the first is half-eradicated in the second; and in the third it is its cure that makes the new one. *Captain Margaret* failed badly when it touched on certain themes. Whenever it dealt with action, with vigour, enterprise, eagerness, this panting prose method was superb. But when it touched anything "poetic"—women, roses, love, ideals—then the old tradition of the Celtic sigh, the hushed accent and the dreamy voice, touched the writer and persuaded him to write in gloves. He parted with his special powers. He became dreamy and the colour faded from his work. For a man must be wide-awake to see visions.

This, then, was his danger—the self-consciously poetic; old, unhappy, far-off things played the deuce with him; and so when news came that he was at work on a novel of modern life, that *Multitude and Solitude* was to be about twentieth-century science, those of us who had watched him eagerly chuckled, sure the trick was done. *Multitude*—it was the very thing;

in *The Street of To-day*, with its surge of swift detail, its myriad faces and reverberant beat, his curious genius, with its eagerness, its glorious power of making circumstantial statements simply sing, would get its supreme opportunity. And what happened? Something which we might indeed have foreseen, so often has it fretted modern art. The mere murk and bitterness, rancour and filth, which have always formed a superficial wrapper round reality, a film which the poet has to pierce, clogged up the bright machinery, embittered the machinist, and sent him, by revulsion, off again in the vague. There are noble chapters in both these books; three-fourths of each is superb; but it was, and it always will be, technically impossible for Masfield to write a masterpiece round a hero who sees modern life as a gigantic misery, London as a cancer, its crowds a suppurating rabble. A Shaw, with his love of a fight, with his verbal sentences specially forged to thrust like spears, could use such a hero quite happily—could use, indeed, no other kind, for his creative energy is only kindled by destruction, he can only fiddle when Rome burns. But Masfield's gift is of the rarer, fresher, finer sort, that can only create among felicities. It has to work in detail; and therefore it must always work constructively, for destruction deals with masses, movements; insults are of all things the least pointed. And so, when Roger Naldrett set to work to preach and propagate a hatred of "the weariness and filth of cities," he was really mutinying against his maker. He is cutting down his masts. For Masfield's methods, if they are going to fight to win, must always sail beneath a jolly Roger.

V

And now the reader sees the human significance of *The Daffodil Fields*—begins to realise that there are battle-fields below them. *The Street of To-day* was spoiled by bitterness; but it was a bitterness due to lack of sympathy; the cure for that lack of sympathy was simply increased human knowledge—the kind of experience that a novelist needs, and wants and welcomes. Another long modern novel might have brought Masfield into port. But no new long novel came. Instead—*The Everlasting Mercy*. Our man had fallen back into the dangerous precincts of Poetry; he was writing a long tale in verse.

And at first it did seem as though he must have found some protective

spell—*The Everlasting Mercy* was never awestruck for one second. The freshness of the medium, the rap of the rhymes, the idea of doing something rather daring, all roused that healthy element of impishness which had saved him once or twice before ; and up and down the ratlines of the metre in *The English Review* his wits went scampering like school-boys in a rigging.

By Dead Man's Thorn, while setting wires,
Who should come up but Billy Myers,
A friend of mine, who used to be
As black a sprig of hell as me,
With whom I'd planned, to save encroachin',
Which fields and coverts each should poach in.
Now when he saw me set my snare—
He tells me "Get to hell from there.
This field is mine," he says, "by right ;
If you poach here, there'll be a fight.
Out now," he says, "and leave your wire—
It's mine."

S.K. "It ain't."
B.M. "You put."
S.K. "You liar."
B.M. "You closhy put."
S.K. "You liar."
B.M. "This is my field."
S.K. "This is my wire."
B.M. "I'm ruler here."
S.K. "You ain't."
B.M. "I am."
S.K. "I'll fight you for it."
B.M. "Right, by damn."

No mock-piety there !—and in spite of the moral tag, the whole prodigious holocaust—firebells, brickbats, copper nozzles, Jimmy Jaggard—is simply unregenerate harlequinade. It is because the thing is a harlequinade that it bubbles melody and beauty ; it sings just because it is a lark. Sheer excitement, as always, set Masfield's imagination glowing ; and the celestial passages granted it are really, technically, the direct reward for Kane's career of horrid crime.

But that could not last. A sense of mischief, of reaction, might supply zest for one such effort—but in the end it was bound to die down ; and the moment it did so the old enemy would advance. Poetry would punish him ; Poetry would beat him to his knees ;—and in *The Daffodil Fields* you see her doing it. For that is the dire truth about them : their gold is that

of the Yellow Book. It is literary, liturgical ; it is strewn with vague symbols ; it is the work of a man writing with reverential, half-closed eyes. It has been condemned, indeed, as prosaic. The truth is that it is far too "poetical." It employs "Death's red sickle" and Michael's "manly grace" ; "Time crawls" in it and "rumours run" ; Mary "trembles like a leaf," turns "cold as a corpse," goes "sick with shame" and "white to the lips." The lines are all stuffed with such relics, old metaphors—once marvellous, but now dirtied by much handling into meaninglessness. And the sense of appropriateness, of tradition, which makes him use these things makes him muffle his own gestures : "many a grey-goose"—"some grass fields"—"all the rooks"—"adjoining land"—"enormous rings"—in the whole of *The Everlasting Mercy* you will not see a single phrase as approximate as these,—and they are all taken from the opening passage. They are evidence of a vision relaxed. That power of prismatic focusing, upon which all his magic depends, seems to have deserted him drearily ; and the loose, irresolute rhymes, the *chatter-water*, *feet-defeat*, *life-is-this—mysteries*, are all symptoms of the same numbness—the result of prostration before a hieratic symbol instead of an excited seizure of the profane, particular fact.

I am generalising now myself, of course, for my space is almost done ; but it isn't captious, hypercritical, to mark these laxities. It takes no cleverness to spot them—they are visible to everybody : the only danger is that they may be ascribed to the wrong cause. They might be put down to indifference—whereas it is just the reverse : it is deference, gravity : it is because Masfield has grown too particular that he has ceased to be particular. For this man's writing, to be powerful, must be metrical in the stricter sense : it must measure, enumerate, be exact ; and it is possible that, in order to be numerical in that sense, it must avoid the noble numerousness of verse. It all depends on this ability to conquer this mesmerism, this awful sense of the sublimity of Art. Perhaps the true worshipper must always seem, and feel, profane : his eagerness filling him with a fire impatient of candles ; perhaps we have all to put a bit of devil into our work before we can achieve the divine. But, at any rate Masfield's key to infinity, I am certain, must always be strictly finite. He must cling to hard, determinate outlines if he is to rouse moods that outstrip calculation and emotions as insubstantial as desire. It is only with verses of an absolutely geometrical exactness that he can induce that condition of trance.

DIXON SCOTT

DRAMATIC CHRONICLE

IT is distressing that, by the time this chronicle is got into print, it will have taken on the character of an obituary. It is so distressing that I am shy of the task and am forced to cast about for some device to avoid it. What life is there in the actual theatre for celebration? There are living words in *Joseph and his Brethren*; but they are words from the Bible and they are placed in so monstrous a context that the light and the inspiration are gone out of them, as, for the benefit of the parsons, it was intended that they should. What an upheaval there might be if the literature of the Bible were given real dramatic life on the stage! What a revolution would fall upon us if the stories of the New Testament were displayed in imaginative action and a steady flame of religious fervour were upheld before our eyes! But the story of Joseph is at His Majesty's no more than a magic-lantern entertainment, such as you shall find in any church school-room, and has as little to do with religion as Mr Shaw's fantasia has to do with Christianity. As a chronicler, I am looking for work which leads my mind forward. Mr Shaw's play leads me back—to Mr Shaw, just as Sir James Barrie's legend of Leonora leads me back to Sir James Barrie, journeys which I have neither the inclination nor the leisure to take, since both their minds are fantastical and aloof from drama and both are exercised like a hooded horse in moving round and round a formula. Both in their fantasias of this autumn seem to have stopped still, to have hesitated and wondered whether their formulæ were really valid for anything but the purpose of tickling audiences; whether if you were to pour water into them they would hold it. Mr Shaw poured into his a sort of hectic perturbation which he takes for religion, and at once tried to stop up the cracks with jokes and his own special and delightful kind of intellectual buffoonery. Sir James Barrie's formula is sentimental and has nothing to do with emotion. Having, for the time being, lost patience with it, he amused himself, in his boyish nonchalance, with shying pebbles at it. Now, it is a good thing to scrap a formula when you find it inadequate, but to scrap it out of petulance is wanton and wasteful, and it is a mistake to do so in public. If the formula is your whole stock-in-trade it is folly to discard it. Sir James acknowledged his mistake and did his best to repair the damage.

Too late, however, and *Leonora* is now replaced by *Quality Street* to show how entertaining the formula used to be. It will be interesting to see how public faith in it has been affected by the author's lapse from discretion.

Androcles has already been replaced by *The Witch*, a good play interestingly produced. That is not altogether commendation, for a production should be interesting in order to lead on to imaginative apprehension. Here, as in so much of Mr Barker's work, interesting things are done for the sake of being interesting. Much of the lighting gives obscurity as well as darkness, and, after all, the sun shone on the people of those days much as it shines on us now, and it is the sun makes the shadow. This insistence on interest for interest's sake, shadow for shadow's, leads away from the heart of the play, from its centre to its circumference. There is too much emphasis in it, and in Miss McCarthy's performance there is darkness without enough light to account for its blackness. Her Anne might really have been a deliberate witch, and but a little persuasion would have set her exploiting the superstition of her time, as palmists and phrenologists and doctors and actresses and popular novelists exploit the superstition of ours. But to my mind there is an essential purity in Anne which opposes light to the darkness of social feeling. With that light the play reaches tragedy. Without it it is no more than an effective piece of the theatre.

Nan came and went. *The Fugitive* came and went. *Oh! I say* goes booming along carrying in the train of its success *This Way, Madam*, the eight prettiest girls, and tango teas. *Nan* left a trail of beauty. *The Fugitive*, like so much of Mr Galsworthy's work, gave the assurance that the moon is shining on the other side of the filmy clouds. It is a queer temperament that can gaze upon the moon without thought of the sun, and can be content to create with no other inspiration. Yet that seems to be a fair picture of Mr Galsworthy's feeling. He can see suffering very bravely, but he cannot rejoice in it. It comes back to thinking of the moon without the sun. Feeling deeply for the sufferings of women, he wipes men out of consideration altogether. The men in *The Fugitive* are so empty and limp that in such a world a woman could not but go mad and would, by its logic, be forced to accept prostitution as the only possible relation with men. To its own theme, then, the end of Mr Galsworthy's play is true; but its theme is a world lit only by the moon, so that all the men in it are shadows and all the women mad from grasping at them. It is curiously a unisexual world, and therefore it is an undramatic world. It is a little more fruitful for our purpose of calling

dramas from the vasty deep, for there are recognisable women in it, whereas in the work of Mr Shaw and Sir James Barrie there are neither men nor women, but puppets only.

There have been many other plays. Mr Chesterton has appeared on the stage with one of his essays in disproportion, endeavouring to test faith by the turning blue of a doctor's red lamp, as he might well have done if he had made the lamp a symbol, and charged it with a spiritual content. But the lamp remains a common lamp, and there is no need of more faith in it than leads to acceptance of the fact that it gives a light. I do not know of any other play in which there was even that much light, but *The Green Cockatoo* is a very fine play, and with another play as good should have gone far to establish Mr Frederick Whelen and Mr McKinnel at the Vaudeville. It is to be hoped that these gentlemen will succeed in their endeavour. The Vaudeville is exactly the right kind of theatre in which to set up the intimacy, the right friendly atmosphere for the nursing and tending of the naturalistic drama that for the time being we must be content to accept. The Kingsway management needs rivalry; a monopoly is bad for any kind of artist, and tends to the development of formulæ. Two or three such little theatres fighting in the good cause might lead to a healthier spirit, and the rivals might squeeze each other up into an imaginative attack on their problem. Without rivalry they will seek to solve it with intelligence and yield to expediency.

All this is hypothesis—Shandean at that. But what can we do? Are we not—by *we*, I mean POETRY AND DRAMA—are we not in the position of Walter Shandy and my Uncle Toby, waiting while Mrs Shandy is lying-in upstairs? What can we do but throw out hypotheses, and whistle *Lillibullero* and read Yorick's sermon, and clean down Doctor Slop, and watch with interest his demonstration with the forceps? Head first, or feet first? It is no great matter, so the infant is born. But it is an anxious time. Impossible not to go back and back over every stage of the getting of it. "I declare, Mr Shandy, you have forgotten to wind up the——" Are there not countless things that we have forgotten? We have translated Ibsen, Tchekov, Strindberg, Hauptmann. We have boomed Shaw and Synge. We have borrowed from Reinhardt a new kind of decoration for our own Shakespeare. We have looked at Gordon Craig's models and drawings. We have tried to destroy the Censorship of Plays. We have drafted a scheme and started a fund for a National Theatre. We have cajoled wealthy ladies into financing

repertory theatres. We have had the most eloquent dissertations from the most learned critics. We have begun to print plays good, bad, and indifferent. It seems that we have omitted no precaution to prepare the atmosphere. We have made it rather thick. Probably what we need is a bad romantic play like *Hernani* to appear as a marvellous work of genius, to clear the air, and then perhaps, quite quietly, with the due pain of birth, a real work of genius may creep into existence to inaugurate the real English drama. Another hypothesis ! How splendid if the weaving of them should go on and on into the year 1914, and then, in the middle of the finest hypothesis of them all (to be delivered in this chronicle in March next)—the infant should be born and come into the world sound in wind and limb ! How splendid, I say ; but I am Shandean enough to dread lest he be born with something worse than a flattened nose. So much do I dread lest one or other of his nurses should stop his yelling and spoil his mouth with the baby's comforter of a formula sentimental or intelligent.

To drop out of Shandyism and to be frank. My feeling now is that when your only begetters are intelligence and sentiment the offspring cannot possibly be drama. In the English theatre we have nothing but intelligence and sentiment. They are both plied dexterously, but to no other purpose than to display the skill of those who ply them ; and that leads nowhere.

GILBERT CANNAN

FRENCH CHRONICLE

UNTIL recently the whole of the lyrical works of Paul Claudel have been almost inaccessible—scattered in reviews or printed only in rare and highly-priced editions ; and the publication now by the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, at 3.50, of the *Cinq Grandes Odes suivies d'un Processional pour saluer le Siècle nouveau* immediately precedes, it is to be hoped, as cheap and as well-printed editions of *Cette Heure qui est entre le Printemps et l'Été, cantate à trois voix*, and of the various hymns and other lyrical poems. Paul Claudel's work is for the world, not for the shelves of bibliophiles.

And yet the world would have some difficulty in finding its way through these five Odes : *Les Muses, L'Esprit et l'Eau, Magnificat, La Muse qui est la Grâce*, and *La Maison fermée*. In *La Muse qui est la Grâce*, I read :

Les mots que j'emploie.
Ce sont les mots de tous les jours, et ce ne sont point les mêmes !
Vous ne trouverez point de rimes dans mes vers, ni aucun sortilège. Ce sont vos phrases
mêmes. Pas aucune de vos phrases que je ne sache reprendre !
Ces fleurs sont vos fleurs et vous dites que vous ne les connaissez pas.
Et ces pieds sont vos pieds, mais voici que je marche sur la mer et que je foule les eaux
de la mer en triomphe.

And in the same Ode again :

Que m'importent tous les hommes à présent ! Ce n'est pas pour eux que je suis fait,
mais pour le
Transport de cette mesure sacrée ! . . .
Que m'importe aucun d'eux ? Ce rythme seul ! Qu'ils me suivent ou non ? Que m'im-
porte qu'ils m'entendent ou pas ?

The difficulty is the difficulty presented by genius. . . . Paul Claudel is undeniably a great poet in every sense ; and in these five Odes the intoxication of his vision of the universe, of his certainty, lifted him above methodical composition. The development of his thought does not proceed by a logical dovetailing of phrases, but by the accumulation of images and rendered visions :

O Grammairien dans mes vers ! Ne cherche point le chemin, cherche le centre !
mesure, comprends l'espace entre ces feux solitaires.

Que je ne sache point ce que je dis ! que je sois une note en travail ! que je sois anéanti dans mon mouvement ! (rien que la petite pression de la main pour gouverner).—*Les Muses*, p. 24.

In his book, *Études*, M. André Rivière has said of these Odes : " A secret thought, the same right to the end, weighs in the heart of the poem, carrying it along by its simple presence, without ever completely unveiling itself. It remains close and dark. But it persists. And though I may not be able, at the last line, to express this thought, at least I have understood it, *taken it with me*. From time to time only, as beneath a rough and tossing sea one catches sight of a rock, the idea under the fluctuation of the images is revealed. It is there, and I am about to seize it. But immediately a new wave of visions rolls up, and it is submerged." And he adds that the puissant undulation of these Odes translates joy in its utmost fulness and generosity. M. Claudel, aware of the difficulty of his Odes, has in this new edition added Arguments ; but they do not explain the poems any more than a chart explains the sea. No, you must plunge into them again and again ; each time you will emerge with some new pearl. . . . As I have explained before in Claudel's own words (see POETRY AND DRAMA, No. 1), the verse-form Claudel uses for preference has neither rhyme nor metre (it has measure and balance), and it is the act of breathing that regulates the length of a verse :

O mon âme impatiente, pareille à l'aigle sans art ! comment ferions-nous pour ajuster
aucun vers ? à l'aigle qui ne sait pas faire son nid même ?
Que mon vers ne soit rien d'esclave ! mais tel que l'aigle marin qui s'est jeté sur un
grand poisson.
Et l'on ne voit rien qu'un éclatant tourbillon d'ailes et l'éclaboussement de l'écume !
Mais vous ne m'abandonnez point, ô Muses modératrices.—*Les Muses*, p. 17.

Claudel's genius, it will be seen, needs freedom and wide spaces wherein to unfold its wings. The narrow Alexandrine, as witness his *Vers d'Exil*, would have encaged it, but—*la petite pression de la main pour gouverner*, . . .
ô *Muses modératrices* !

Ainsi un poème n'est point comme un sac de mots, il n'est point seulement,
Ces choses qu'il signifie, mais il est lui-même un signe, un acte imaginaire, créant
Le temps nécessaire à sa résolution
A l'imitation de l'action humaine étudiée dans ses ressorts et dans ses poids.

Claudel has a Biblical grandeur. " Savez-vous," said Charles-Louis

Philippe to MM. Georges Le Cardonnell and Charles Vellay when they were conducting their "Enquête," "Savez-vous que nous avons un grand génie égal à Dante ? C'est Claudel !"

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Un essai de rénovation dramatique : le théâtre du Vieux Colombier. "In the month of October next," says M. Jacques Copeau in the September number of *La Nouvelle Revue Française*, "a new theatre will be opened in Paris, at 21 rue du Vieux Colombier. It will take the name of 'Théâtre du Vieux Colombier.' Its programme will be composed of European classical masterpieces, of certain modern works already consecrated, and of works of the younger generation." The drama of to-day, he thinks, is the most decried of all the arts ; the theatre is becoming more and more degraded by industrialism. The Théâtre du Vieux Colombier is a reaction against this state of things, an attempt at renovation. "We will labour to restore to the theatre its lustre and its grandeur. To this task, in default of genius, we will bring a resolute ardour, a concerted strength, disinterestedness, patience, method, intelligence and culture, the love and need of what is well done." Fine words, indeed ; but there is hardly a doubt that M. Copeau will do even as he says ; and already there are those who prophesy victory and all the honours for the new enterprise. M. Copeau began by choosing his company of actors, and he then took them into the country, to Limon, near Ferté-sous-Jouarre, Seine-et-Marne, to train them in the open air. For two months they worked together, under M. Copeau's direction, towards homogeneity and excellence, and the mastery of their repertoire. Five hours a day were given to rehearsals and two to reading aloud at sight and the study of texts and to physical exercises, for the cultivation of vocal articulation and of suppleness of mind and body. Everything has been carefully thought out ; the theatre holds only five hundred people ; but the budget is such that even moderate audiences will mean prosperity. The bill will be changed every other day, so that unremunerative and novel plays can be produced and the actors be kept in constant training. The repertory is catholic and wide. Here is the programme for the 1913-14 season : Théâtre Antique : Eschyle, *Agamemnon* ; Euripide, *Les Troyennes*. Théâtre Français : 1° Répertoire Classique : Molière, *Don Juan*, *L'Avare*, *Sganarelle*, ou *le Cocu imaginaire*, *L'Amour médecin* ; Racine, *Britannicus*. 2° Pièces Modernes—A. Reprises : Alfred de Musset, *Barberine* ; Prosper Mérimée, —, (Théâtre de Clara Gazul), *L'Occasion* ; Henri Becque, *La Navette*,

Jules Renard, *Le Pain de Ménage*; Georges de Porto-Riche, *La Chance de Françoise*; Tristan Bernard, *Daisy*; Georges Courteline, *La Peur des Coups*; B. Premières Représentations : Francis Vielé-Griffin, *Phocas le Jardinier*, Paul Claudel; *L'Échange*, André Suarès, *La Tragédie d'Electre et Oreste*; Henri Ghéon, *L'Eau de Vie*; Jean Schlumberger, *Les Fils Louverné*; Alexandre Arnoux, *Le Lien*; Jacques Copeau, *La Maison Natale*. Théâtre Étranger (ancien et moderne) : William Shakespeare, *La Nuit des Rois* (*Twelfth Night*); Thomas Heywood, *Une femme tuée par la douceur*; Henrik Ibsen, *Rosmersholm*; Stanislas Wyspianski, *Les Juges*; G. Bernard Shaw, *Une comédie*. "All the originality of our interpretation," says M. Copeau, "if any is found, will come from a thorough knowledge of the texts." The Théâtre du Vieux Colombier is open to all attempts, provided they reach a certain level, a certain dramatic quality. He has also some interesting remarks about the "mise en scène, nous entendons : le dessin d'une action dramatique," i.e. the interpretation of a play, to which hardly too much study can be given. To the other "mise en scène" which is concerned with scenery and accessories, he attaches no importance. A homogeneous company of actors, no one of them monopolising attention, and with them an interpretation that shall link up and vitalise each episode, so that the play lives as a whole : these are essentials. "Nous ne savons pas ce que sera le théâtre de demain. Nous n'annonçons rien. Mais nous nous vouons à réagir contre toutes les lâchetés du théâtre contemporain. En fondant le Théâtre du Vieux Colombier nous préparons un lieu d'asile au talent futur." On the first night, Heywood's *Woman killed with Kindness* and a comedy by Molière were given.

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The Théâtre du Vieux Colombier has also arranged a series of twenty-four *poetic matinées* (Thursday), which will cover the whole field of French poetry, from the *Chanson de Roland* to the present day.

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In the June number of a new and very interesting periodical, *Montjoie !* (*organe de l'impérialisme artistique français*) may be found these words : "The year 1913 will have confirmed the fall of two authors who have enjoyed a world-wide vogue : Maurice Maeterlinck and Gabriel d'Annunzio. Let us not regret this. The same year has seen the bursting forth of the glory of Claudel. . . . Let us salute mournfully Maeterlinck and d'Annunzio. Let us salute Claudel with joy." The number for the 16th May of

Montjoie! was devoted to "The Crisis of the French Theatre." And yet, in spite of the commercialism of the theatre and the ignorance of the public, there are a number of men whose work is worthy of attention, some of admiration: Claudel, Verhaeren, André Gide (*Gygès, Le Roi Candaule*), Henri Ghéon (*Le Pain, L'Eau de Vie*), Maurice de Faramond (*La Noblesse de Terre, Monsieur Bonnet, Mauvais Grain, Diane de Poitiers, La Dame qui n'est plus aux camélias*); and younger men, Jean Schlumberger (*La Mort de Sparte*); Jules Romains (*L'Armée dans la Ville*); and Pierre-Jean Jouve, Georges Duhamel, René Arcos, O.-W. Milosz, whose plays or dramatic poems, *Les Deux Forces, Le Combat, L'Île Perdue*, and *Miguel Mañara*, respectively, have just been published. If any of the works of these authors have ever been performed, it has been but casually; but one might say of most of them in the words of M. Henri Ghéon: "I discern in them the same care for style in the double sense of the word (language and order), a same tendency to generalise the conflict, to magnify the characters without injuring their complexity, a same ambition to exalt the real, without allowing this exaltation to mask reality, a same will to express life and to construct" (*Nos Directions*, p. 118). Indeed, whatever dramatic faults some of these plays may possess, there is a nobility of intention in them all. The impetus that an open theatre would give to their authors would shear from their work any tendency to esotericism which the concentricity of the book almost forces upon it.

M. Pierre-Jean Jouve's play, *Les Deux Forces* (Effort Libre, 2.50) seems to have been influenced in style by the work of Claudel. The two Forces?—the force of passion and the economic force of the world? It is not clear. An engineer (Sériès) finds in the satisfaction of his passion for a woman (Mme Mégard) a strength of will and a largeness of conception lacking in him till then. "Par une après-midi d'avril," says the banker Durker, "beau soleil, bon vent, joie de vivre—dans le silence des bureaux, un homme sent s'ébaucher en lui le commencement d'un surhomme." In the joyous certainty of this new impulse, he enlarges the plans, timidly conceived at first, of the docks that are nearing completion, after ten years' work; and he carries through his new projects against all objection and all opposition—opposition of his financial colleagues and their financial enemies, of his own engineers, of his workmen, who strike. "Par sa joie," says his mistress, "mon corps devenait les chantiers, les bureaux, les banques de la ville, et, plus loin que les trains, d'autres bureaux et d'autres banques, des foules sur le devant

des Bourses, des rues, des champs, des maisons hautes, des grands trajets dans la mer." The subject-matter of the play is modern ; you are the whole time amidst an ambience created by the presence of machinery and the instruments of modern industrial life ; groups coalesce, break apart, grow and diminish according to the disposition of the psychological forces engaged in action ; and these forces and groupings interest the author more than individual characterisation. But the effect is not artificial and the play is perfectly human. In the preface to *L'Armée dans la Ville*, M. Romain says : " Every dramatic work sets groups in motion. The isolated individual, who dominates many lyrical poems, has no place in the theatre. That which we call a ' scene ' in a play is nothing but the precarious and ardent life of a group. An act is a combination of groups. The spectator sees them following each other, opposing, penetrating and begetting each other. Or, rather, he has not yet learned to see them. Of all the groups, the couple is the only one that dramatists have seized in its original unity and nature. Beyond this, they have represented only more or less necessary encounters of individuals." M. Jouve is one of the younger men of to-day who understand this. One occasionally seems to catch the Claudelian accent in this play ; but, on the whole, M. Jouve can only be said to have gone to the school of Claudel and to have profited by what he learned there—a perfectly legitimate thing to do. Where the emotion works up to lyrical intensity, a balance begins to be felt in the periods, which take a versicle form :

Puisque l'amour que j'ai eu s'inscrit dans une grande œuvre de pierre, au milieu du monde !
 Puisque je l'ai quitté, cet amour . . . comme la chair séparée par le couteau quitte la chair !

Elsewhere there is balance, but over longer periods, the advantage of this form as against a strict and restricted verse-form being that it gives a wide series of gradations from prose to verse.

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M. Duhamel's *Combat* confronts us with a country at the mercy of a river that, overflowing, spreads rot and disease everywhere, material and moral ;—shows it too well, indeed ; you smell the mist and feel the dampness in your bones. There seems no hope in any one. But the certainty of his approaching death inspires the consumptive son of the principal landowner of the district to stir his father and friends from their lethargy, and to

build a dike as a protection against the waters. He dies alone, neglected, at the moment of victory over the river, the whole country-side, old and young, men and women, having rushed, in a race with the rising flood, to fill the last breach with stones and rubble. *Le Combat* is the struggle first with the moral influence of a periodical calamity, and then with its cause; the welfare and destiny of a people are at stake. It is an illustration of one of M. Duhamel's theories (and herein may be detected the influence of Claudel) that the interest of a play should be in the drama itself, and it should owe nothing to contemporary events or particular localities. *Le Combat* is written in unrhymed verse, but not in *vers libre*. The preface of M. Romains, from which I have already quoted, says also that "great dramatic art demands verse. Prose is an imperfection, a licence, so much less beauty." *L'Armée dans la Ville* is, as I have pointed out elsewhere, written in blank verse, the length of the line in the periods being determined by the intensity of the emotional moment. So, too, *Le Combat*. I note one interesting and, it seems to me, effective experiment. Gérard, the consumptive who rouses the country to combat the river, makes a speech to the peasants wherein he tries to get them to understand his project. He begins slowly; the length of the line is seven syllables; as he warms up to his subject the length of the lines passes from seven, to eight, nine, ten, eleven, and at last to twelve syllables, the ringing Alexandrine; the speech gaining in speed and eloquence meanwhile. *Le Combat* is soberly written, with no romantic fustian, the language always being adequate to the situation. M. Duhamel has himself said that "the error of the romantic theatre and of the contemporary theatre consists in the use of lyrical language from the beginning of the drama, and in circumstances that do not warrant it. Lyricism should spring naturally from the action, and at the moment it appears it should respond to the need, of the spectator, duly prepared; it should fill a void. It is much less difficult to put into the mouth of a character a fine poetic passage than to make him say exactly the words suggested by the *pathos* of the moment. . . . Therefore, a resultant, never a pre-conceived, lyricism." But I think that M. Duhamel's *Dans l'Ombre des Statues* indicates that his destiny lies in what is known as prose. Prose? I have had all the emotions of poetry out of such prose as may be written in imaginative literature. The distinction between prose and verse has begotten the illusion that there is a distinction between prose and poetry. Poetry is a quality of words put together at the behest of the emotions and

the imagination, irrespective of forms, the establishment of which has been due to a natural human desire to lay down rules and laws whereby effects once obtained may be repeated. They have been repeated—alas !

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M. René Arcos's *poème dramatique*, *L'Île Perdue*, is in prose. "Les cinq actes se passent dans une île que l'imagination peut situer parmi les îles de la Polynésie." Thither has fled a band of utopians, leaving behind them a country angry beneath the rule of an unassailable despot. Rather than remain behind and destroy, they wish to be free to build anew in a region where life is easy and virginal and the sun abets. But they cannot root out their interest in the country of their birth ; a passing ship sets them sighing and pondering ; some one has even sent a message home against their mutual compact, violating so the conditions under which they had been granted land by the ruler of the island. Only Timon, the idealist, is unmoved—steeped and eloquent in his dreams of a new becoming and a victory—"tracer le meilleur homme dans la meilleure vie." His words banish their newly awakened, unavowed, and hardly conscious longing to return. But the message home has been sent by Laure, his betrothed, to her brother, Philippe Corme, a man violent and pitiless in his hatred of the king : and Corme arrives. He has killed the tyrant, and has come to recall the exiles ; the work of reconstruction awaits them at home. But they put him off ; they have started a new life here ; why should they return to the old cares and responsibilities ? Philippe is angry ; he calls them cowards and renegades. Soon the debate resolves itself into a struggle between Timon, the master-mind of the community, and Philippe, and finally Timon, feeling that he has no support in his friends, tires and gives way. As they depart, he blows up the house they had been building and dies beneath the ruin.

Like the other writers in this group, M. Arcos has sought the highest expression of a general sentiment. His characters are not drawn for themselves, but for the attitude they each represent ; they are not dependent on contingencies of time and place. The conflict between the idealism of Timon and the spirit of practical politics in Corme is felt and foreshadowed from the first in the presence of Laure. The scenes between Laure and Timon and between Corme and the community and Timon reach a high pitch of poetic passion.

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But perhaps the most completely satisfying of the four dramatic works

before me is M. O. W. Milosz's *Miguel Mañara, mystère en six tableaux* (*Nouvelle Revue Française*, 2.50). In the other three, you feel that the technician or the philosopher is in the foreground ; in M. Milosz's work, the poet. Don Miguel Mañara Vicentelo de Leca, M. Milosz says, is " the historical Don Juan of whom the Romantics made Don Juan Marana." If that is so, Don Juan has been most horribly maligned, for he seems to have been a noble scoundrel, and not at all the heartless lecher that Molière and Mozart paint. Indeed, M. Milosz's Don Juan is, fundamentally, not very different from Mr Shaw's ; the external differences are of course enormous. Don Miguel Mañara drags about with him a vast boredom.

Car le temps est long ; car le temps est terriblement long, Messieurs,
 et je suis las étrangement de la chienne de vie que voilà. Ne point gagner Dieu, c'est
 vétille, à coup sûr,
 mais perdre Satan, c'est douleur grande et ennui vaste, par ma foi.
 J'ai traîné l'Amour dans le plaisir, et dans la boue, et dans la mort ;
 je fus traître, blasphémateur, bourreau ; j'ai accompli
 tout cela que peut entreprendre un pauvre diable d'homme,
 et voyez ! j'ai perdu Satan. Satan s'est retiré de moi.
 Je mange l'herbe amère du rocher de l'ennui.
 J'ai besogné Vénus avec rage, puis avec malice et dégoût.
 Aujourd'hui je lui tordrais le cou en bâillant.

But he meets Girolama Carillo, and for a while the darkness is dispelled :

Vous avez allumé une lampe dans mon cœur :
 et me voici comme le malade qui s'endort dans les ténèbres
 avec le charbon de la fièvre sur le front et la glace de l'abandon dans le cœur,
 et puis qui se réveille en sursaut dans une belle chambre
 où toutes choses baignent dans la musique étale de la lumière . . .

She dies, and the Spirit of Heaven tells him to rejoice. He carries his sorrow to a monastery, and, growing in grace, works a miracle. He dies soon after with verses from the Psalms on his lips and the voice of the Spirit of Heaven in his ears. M. Milosz's *Miguel Mañara* is a sombre piece of work, but very fine and very moving. The language, imagery, and rhythm are those of a poet.

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I have two books of verse that have pleased me for the same and for opposite reasons: *Les Servitudes*, by Philéas Lebesgue, and *Alcools*, by Guillaume Apollinaire (*M. de F.*, 3.50 each) : there is poetry in both, but in the first it springs from contact with simple, natural things ; in the second,

from a complex of culture and phantasy. M. Lebesgue sings his family, his native village, its animals, trades, work, dreams, and . . . his escapes therefrom ; M. Apollinaire, all the subtle fancies, images, symbols that his mind weaves into the stuff of his emotions ; his portrait by Pablo Picasso is given as a—cryptic—frontispiece ; he has suppressed all punctuation in his verses ; he is exotic, deliberately artificial, and willingly obscure. But both are poets, M. Lebesgue appealing to the brain through the heart ; M. Apollinaire to the heart through the brain. Quotation will show their qualities and their differences. First from M. Lebesgue :

Tu as vieilli, ma Mère, et quand je vois tes rides,
Ton dos courbé, tes bras amaigris, ta pâleur,
Je sens monter, du fond de ma poitrine aride,
Jusqu'à mes tristes yeux une averse de pleurs.
La noblesse des traits usés affirme encore
Que tu fus belle en ton printemps, et ton regard
Atteste une vertu que notre époque ignore,
Quelque chose dont l'or ne peut acheter l'art.

Or, from " In memoriam patris " :

Je suis venu m'entretenir, ce soir,
Avec ton image éternelle ;
Dans la grand'salle, où l'âtre vide est resté sans feu,
Où le dernier tison n'a plus une étincelle,
En face du fauteuil où tu ne songes plus,
Je suis venu m'assevoir ;
Je t'ai parlé de tout mon cœur silencieux ;
Je t'ai revu
Pensivement penché sur le livre ouvert,
Et la main droite à ton front nu,
Je t'ai parlé : tu n'as pas répondu !

But these clipped quotations are doing M. Lebesgue an injustice. From M. Apollinaire's " La Maison des Morts " :

Arrivé à Munich depuis quinze ou vingt jours
J'étais entré pour la première fois et par hasard
Dans ce cimetière presque désert
Et je claquais des dents
Devant toute cette bourgeoisie
Exposée et vêtue le mieux possible
En attendant la sépulture.

Soudain
Rapide comme ma mémoire
Les yeux se rallumèrent

De cellule vitrée en cellule vitrée
Le ciel se peupla d'une apocalypse
Vivace.

Et la terre plate à l'infini
Comme avant Galilée
Se couvrit de mille mythologies immobiles
Un ange en diamant brisa toutes les vitrines
Et les morts m'accostèrent
Avec des mines de l'autre monde.

And then the poet and the dead march off to the strange inconsequent adventures that one has in dreams—a curious, remarkable poem. *La Synagogue* is a poem of a kind that seems new in French :

Ottomar Scholem et Abraham Loeweren
Coiffés de feutres verts le matin du sabbat
Vont à la synagogue en longeant le Rhin
Et les coteaux où les vignes rougissent là-bas.

Ils se disputent et crient des choses qu'on ose à peine traduire . . .

Parce que pendant le sabbat on ne doit pas fumer
Tandis que les chrétiens passent avec des cigares allumés
Et parce qu' Ottomar et Abraham aiment tous deux
Lia aux yeux de brebis et dont le ventre avance un peu . . .

Les Servitudes and *Alcools* should be read by all who are interested in contemporary French poetry.

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I wish to recommend, too, the work of M. Luc Durtain, who is one of the band of admirably intelligent young men gathered round *Les Bandeaux d'Or*. M. Durtain has published three books : *Pégase* (Sansot, 3.50), a volume of light, witty poems ; *L'Étape Nécessaire* (Sansot, 3.50), in which he has flung pell-mell all the impressions of his formative years—a necessary stage, but memorable, and recorded in many a profound page ; and *Manuscrit trouvé dans une Île*, just published (Crès, 3.50), five *contes*, that reveal mastery and . . . good masters ; read *Complices*. M. Durtain should be watched. He promises some extraordinarily good work.

REVIEWS : *Mercure de France*.—Aug. 16 : *Rabindranath Tagore*, H.-D. Davray ; *Green*, poésies, René Kerdyk ; *La Prise de Paris*, nouvelle, Jules Romains. Sept. 1 : *Henrik Ibsen intime*, George Brandes ; *Clercs et Écoliers au temps de François Villon*, Pierre Champion. Sept. 16 : *Les Amitiés littéraires d'Alfred de Vigny*, L. Séché ; *Le vrai Mystère de la Passion*, Laurent Tailhade. Oct. 1 : *Paul Verlaine et l'Amour*, Paul Escoube ; *La Poésie d'Emmanuel Signoret*, J.-M. Bernard. Oct. 16 :

Le Secret de Charlotte Brontë, H.-D. Davray; *A propos de quelques poètes nouveaux*, René Arcos. Nov. 1: *Dans l'intimité de Léon Deubel*, Louis Pergaud; *Portraits graphologiques*: MM. Gustave Kahn, Maurice Barrès, Francis Jammes, Jules Renard, René Quinton, E. de Rougemont. Nov. 16: *Le Problème de Rimbaud*; *Son exposé*, Marcel Coulon; *Le Calembour*, l'Énigme, l'Allégorie dans *Homère*, Philippe Champault; *La Question Walt Whitman*, Stuart Merrill (this will surely dispose of the "question").

La Nouvelle Revue Française.—Aug.: *Poèmes*, Paul Claudel; *Le Fruit plein de cendre*, poems by Henry Aliès; *Un Livre sur Ronsard*, Albert Thibaudet; notes on the Russian Ballet (*Sacre du Printemps*, etc.), Francis Thompson, Alice Meynell. Sept.: *Un essai de rénovation dramatique le Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier*, Jacques Copeau; *Poèmes*, René Bichet. Oct.: *Deux livres sur Proudhon*, Michel Arnauld; *Influence du théâtre français sur le théâtre allemand de 1870 à 1900*, Paul Fritsch. Nov.: *Souvenirs de la Cour d'Assises*, André Gide; *Le Sacre du Printemps*, Jacques, Rivière.

La Phalange.—July: *Henri Poincaré et la mort des vérités nécessaires*, L. Rougier; "Poetry" section devoted to poems by and articles on Léon Deubel, who was found drowned in the Marne. August: this number did not reach us; probably because, despite requests, supplications, implorations, this review is still sent to our old address. Sept.: *Lettres de la Brousse*, Robert Randau; *Nouronibar, pantomime en trois suites de danses*, Carl Einstein. Oct.: *Albert Thibaudet et les deux coursiers d'Eutyphron*, Jean Florence; *La Grande Époque* (nouvelle), Valéry Larband; poems by J. Royère, Paul Castiaux, etc.

Le Temps Présent.—Sept.: *Quelques petits revues d'hier*, Gaston Picard. Oct.: *A propos des Odes de Paul Claudel*, Henriette Charasson. Nov.: *Adrien Mithouard*, Gaston Sauvebois.

Vers et Prose.—April to Sept.: *Chansons pour me consoler d'être heureux*, Paul Fort; *Du Classique*, André Suarès; *Train de Soldats* (mots en liberté), F.-F. Marinetti. And copious other things.

La Vie des Lettres.—Oct.: Poem and article by Francis Jammes; *L'Homme Cosmogonique*, poème paroxyste en trois chants, wherein M. Beauduin proclaims his exaltation in contemplation of human destiny; *Un après-midi chez Moréas*, Marcel Coulon, etc., etc.

L'Effort libre, revue de civilisation révolutionnaire.—July–Sept.: poems by P.-C. Jablonski, André Spire. Oct.: *De la déclamation du vers français*, André Spire; *Chansons du Ghetto*, Raymond-Geiger;—and sociological articles, etc. I recommend this review as a model to socialists with artistic interests. There is room for a similar one in England.

Les Bandeaux d'Or.—July–Oct.: *In Memoriam* (poem) and *Sur la mort d'un poète* (article; both on Léon Deubel), P.-J. Jouve; very fine. Poems and prose by G. Duhamel, P. Castiaux, Luc Durtain, René Arcos.

La Revue Critique des Idées et des Livres.—Aug. 10: *La poésie de Mme de Noailles*, Henri Clouard. Aug. 25: *Le génie de La Fontaine*, Jean Longnon; *Guillaume Coquillart: La poésie bourgeoise au XV^e siècle*, J.-M. Bernard. Sept. 10: *L'Aventure de l'art moderne*, Henri Clouard. Oct. 10: *L'Introduction de la Satire en France: Mathurin Régnier*, J.-M. Bernard. Nov. 10: *Philippe Desportes*, J.-M. Bernard. Numerous historical and political articles. In literature, politics, and art *La Revue critique* seeks and bases itself upon an intelligent interpretation of tradition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: *La Poésie française du Moyen-Âge, XI^e–XV^e siècles*, recueil de textes, accompagnés de traductions, de notices, et précédé d'une étude littéraire par Ch. Oulmont; *Préférences* (essays), Paul Escoube; *Prétextes*, André Gide; *Lumières du Monde* (poèmes), Paul Castiaux; *Les Blés mouvants* (poèmes), Emile Verhaeren (*M. de Fr.*, 3.50 ea.). *Parler* (poèmes) P.-J. Jouve (Crès, 2.50). *Métiers Divins*, Jean de Bosschère (Bibl. de "L'Occident"). *L'Éloge de la Grâce*, Lucien Rolmer (Figuière, 4.00), *Au vent crispé du Matin*, poèmes et proses, Francis Carco; *La Flûte Fleurie*, Tristan Derème (Coulanges, subscription).

F. S. FLINT

AMERICAN POETRY

THIS is not a Chronicle. One cannot write a Chronicle with only a dozen books published during the last eighteen months for data. Nor does an examination of these books, combined with more or less casual acquaintance with American literary journals, suggest that a periodic Chronicle would be of particular interest or value. Nevertheless, this very miscellaneous collection is not devoid of matter for consideration. Consisting of a comprehensive anthology of American Poetry from the time of the Settlement to the end of the last century, two dramatic poems and nine or ten volumes of lyric and narrative verse, it provides some opportunity for discovering what, if any, are the particular characteristics which distinguish American poetry from English poetry and the poetry of other nations.

Now, it is just as well to state at the beginning that I can find no support to a belief that there is any such thing as American poetry; just as an examination of the Metropolitan Museum of New York finally destroyed my idea that there was any such thing as American art. American architecture indisputably exists, but that is obviously less due to a distinctive æsthetic sensibility than to the economic conditions of the nation and its cities. These will obviously not affect its poetry in the same direct way, and poetry therefore provides an excellent test for the real artistic feeling of the nation. Let me, in the first place, hasten to congratulate Professor Bronson on the patriotic labour which he has expended on his anthology; "patriotic," because it is difficult to conceive any other motive for undertaking so extensive and tedious a labour. No blame rests on him that the result is a monument of mediocrity. Though much space has been devoted to the earlier writers, the history of poetry in America begins with Poe and ends, so far as the nineteenth century is concerned, with Whitman. This is not only historically but comprehensively true. The actual poetry of Holmes, Emerson, Whittier, Longfellow, and Lowell combined, when compared with these two, could be put into half a dozen pages. Nevertheless, being representative American poets, they will have to be taken into consideration. No argument can claim this distinction for Poe. His was an exotic genius, of no race or age; his affinities, as has been frequently pointed out, being more Celtic than anything else. This fact does not, of course, disentitle him to the

first place in an anthology such as this ; but, as he owes nothing to America, and expresses nothing American, it is sufficient here to proclaim him and to pass on to other writers of more immediate interest. Whitman, on the other hand, is the most natural of American products. His universality, immensity, formlessness, his vigour, his love of wild nature and great spaces—all are characteristics which mark him as not only by far the greatest, but as also the most typical, of American poets ; typical more because these are characteristics directly derived by a great mind from magnificent surroundings, than because they are normally exhibited by the majority of his countrymen or compatriot poets. It is easy to define a poet in such a way as to definitely exclude Whitman from the category ; but such an exclusion can only be made on the grounds of the formlessness which I have admitted, and even in this respect he is the superior of the rest. The sense of form displayed by Longfellow and his other contemporaries is that of the builder of a row of villas or of a child with wooden bricks. It is true that the row of villas possesses form in that it is composed of a number of identical units, but it lays no claim to artistry. Whitman, at least, had sufficient sense of form to recognise that the mere imitation either of his own forms or of the forms of others would be both futile and disastrous. He therefore did without them. Nevertheless, there is more poetic form in the *thought* of Whitman than there is in any of the smooth verses of Longfellow.

Imitation has, in fact, been the overmastering vice of American poets. Lowell imitated Wordsworth, and, to a less extent, Keats. Longfellow, though he had some initiative, chiefly imitated Tennyson and the Germans. Their predecessors erred in the same way (there is a passage in the *chef d'œuvre* of Timothy Dwight beginning, "Fair Verna, loveliest village of the West !"), and the tradition is fairly upheld by the present generation. Of the various volumes before me, two bear names that one remembers having heard before, and which are, I believe, accounted of much honour "on the other side." But what do they present ? Mr Cale Young Rice imitates Stephen Phillips at his worst (the comparison has been made *ad nauseam* in America), and Mr Clinton Scollard is yet another copyist of that most fashionable of masters, Keats. Of the rest, Mr Charlton M. Lewis essays a tale of Gawayne in the manner of *The Ingoldsby Legends*, and Mr Rhys Carpenter makes the greatest mistake of all in imitating Shakespeare. Wherever a less direct derivation is traceable, a greater incapacity is evinced. That is the most distressing symptom of all. Even in subject matter the majority

appear to find little of interest in their native country. Do none of the above writers find worthy qualities either in the cities or vast and varied territories of America? Mr Rice's play, stripped of its medieval garb, is rather obvious melodrama; surely that is a phenomenon to be found without a journey to Naples and across an interval of 350 years. What, again, induces Mr Louis How to write of Italy and "long, languorous hot nights of June"? Europe and European culture is worth consideration, but it is so much more keenly felt and better expressed by those to whom it belongs. Admonition is, of course, valueless. If those who wish to write poetry do not feel the dignity or vitality of their own country they will not write about it. Possibly the fault is not theirs, though Whitman succeeded in remaining both an American and a poet. Of this I am convinced: when American poetry is written it will again concern itself *with America*. In the meantime, Americans may just as well sell their literary Cook's tickets and try to inculcate at home that sense of form of which they are so sadly devoid in every branch of their national life.

But there is one characteristic considerably in evidence among their books which is both positive and truly American. I can give it no other name than "cosmicity." It consists in an obsession with the idea of the unity of the universe and all things therein, and shows itself in a profusion of capital letters and in such phrases as "Primordial Earth," "And trust the Infinite to see him through," "O once again with Nature face to face!" (shades of Whitman!) "Time the slow pulse which beats eternity," etc. These are taken at random—it would be possible to produce many more and much better examples—from the work of Mr William Ellery Leonard and other writers, and represent the attempts to grapple with big ideas by minds too small to compass them. They arise from the same causes which produced Whitman, who is certainly in part also responsible. They are inevitable, and there is no harm in them. They are at any rate indigenous and when another big mind arrives may again find competent expression.

I am aware that there are many poets in America whose work has not here been taken into consideration, and that those criticised are by no means all of the best. Certainly, were I to conclude without mention of Mr Ezra Pound I should lay myself open to grave charges of having cooked the account. Mr Pound is a unique phenomenon, for he has succeeded in being an American, a man of culture and a poet, all at the same time. The most interesting point is that he has shown American culture to be pos-

sible. Not that he has developed a *new* culture, but that he has imbued the old European culture with a certain breadth of vitality and egoism which is entirely American. It is this quality which makes him of the tradition of Whitman. The cloak has hitherto sat comfortably upon him. But let him beware. There have been signs in his latest work that his strength is becoming self-conscious, and any quality which is self-conscious soon degenerates into a pose.

Notwithstanding Mr Pound, the characteristics I have attributed to American verse are, in general, so marked, and have become so traditional, that I believe I have not overstated the case. There is, with the few exceptions already made, no American poetry; neither do I foresee that there will be (unless another exotic spirit like Poe or another giant like Whitman be born, about which prophecy is merely impertinent to Fate), until America realises that she is still in long clothes and postpones to a maturer date her efforts after a garb which is neither her own nor her due. In the meantime I should like to organise a fund for the free distribution of a select number of the Futurist manifestos, or, better still, to persuade Signor Marinetti to cross the Atlantic in person. The result, if any, would probably be startling.

JOHN ALFORD

Appended is a list of books on which the above remarks are based:

- American Poems, 1625-1892.* Selected and Edited by Walter C. Bronson. (Chicago: University Press. London: Cambridge University Press. 6s. net.)
- The Vaunt of Man and other Poems.* By William Ellery Leonard. (B. W. Huebsch, New York. \$1.25 net.)
- Porzia.* By Cale Young Rice. (Doubleday, New York. 5s. net.)
- Merchants from Cathay.* By William Rose Benét. (The Century Co., New York. \$1.20 net.)
- The Inner Garden: a Book of Verse.* By Horace Holley. (Sherman, French: Boston. 4s. 6d. net.)
- The Tragedy of Etarre: a Poem.* By Rhys Carpenter. (Sturgis & Walton, New York. \$1.25.)
- Songs Through the Night.* By Mary Ellis Robins. (Published by the author.)
- Gabriel: a Pageant of Vigil.* By Isabelle Howe Fiske. (The Mosher Press, Portland. \$2.10 net.)
- The Youth Replies.* By Louis How. (Sherman, French. \$1 net.)
- The Unconquered Air.* By Florence Earle Coates. (Houghton, Mifflin: Boston. \$1.25.)
- Lyrics from a Library.* By Clinton Scollard. (Browning: Clinton, New York. \$1.)
- Poems and Ballads.* By Hermann Hagedorn. (Houghton, Mifflin. \$1.25.)
- A Dome of Many-coloured Glass.* By Amy Lowell. (Houghton, Mifflin. 5s. net.)
- Gawayne and the Green Knight.* By Charlton M. Lewis. (Yale Univ. Press. 4s. 6d. net.)
- Personæ and Exultations of Ezra Pound.* (Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.)
- Canzoni and Ripostes of Ezra Pound, whereto are appended the Complete Poetical Works of T. E. Hulme.* (Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.)

REVIEWS

OXFORD POETRY, 1910-1913. Edited by G.D.H.C., G.P.D., and W.S.V. Introduction by Gilbert Murray. (Blackwell, 3s. 6d. net.) CAMBRIDGE POETS, 1900-1913. Chosen by Aelfrida Tillyard. Introduction by A. T. Quiller-Couch. (Heffer. 5s. net)

"THE poetry is produced in spite of all." So says Professor Gilbert Murray, who knows something of both universities. And I think that similar collections of Manchester, or Newcastle, or Cardiff, or Birmingham poetry, by men of under twenty-five, would not very greatly differ from *Oxford Poetry*, or at all excel it. *Cambridge Poets* includes the work of women, of men who took their degrees twelve years ago or more, and men who are still undergraduates. It may be said of both sets, what Professor Murray says of the Oxford set, that they are "at one point or another, in touch with almost all the moving impulses of contemporary poetry," while some of the Cambridge poets, such as Messrs Aleister Crowley and Rupert Brooke, are already among those impulses, and still more, such as Mrs Cornford, "John Presland," Sarojini Naidu, and Messrs Flecker, H. O. Meredith, Harold Monro, and J. C. Squire are among the marked personalities of the day. And it seems to me that uncommonly few of these bear plain signs of their university connections. Nor are there many among the less known or younger writers who do so. A few Oxonians are allowed to show their skill in humorous verse of kinds familiar to university men: there is even a "Dollares, our Lady of the Wheat-corner (after A.C.S.)." But Mrs Graham has kept such things out of the Cambridge volume, and Mr Dermot Freyer, for example, is represented by entirely serious poems. Thus, I do not find, and I do not miss, the parodies, and the excessively spiritual or excessively cynical verses, which formerly were the only varieties open to university men. What I do miss is the work of Mr Vivian Locke Ellis. However big the mesh of the editor's net, Mr Ellis would have to be forced through it if he was ever there.

Most of these men and women have made a considerable effort to get down through the poetic conventions or right away from them. Except in form: there is little eccentricity in form, though Messrs Douglas Cole and J. S. Muirhead of Oxford use sequences of various lyric stanzas, in one case with intervals of blank verse. And in escaping convention they have many leaders but scarce any models. Mr Geoffrey Dennis of Oxford has followed Mr Belloc rather closely. Mr A. J. Dawe, also of Oxford, may be following Mr Masfield. But, as a rule, the object is to look in their own hearts and write. They are for youth and freedom. Sometimes, like Mr Wilfred Rowland Childe of Oxford, they choose comparatively old idyllic methods:

Take here long rambling careless walks,
And tire their comrades with vast talks,

And see great infinite hopes unfurled,
Drink beer and tea in lonely inns,
Dismiss the seven deadly sins,
Alter the universe at will . . .

or, like Mr Muirhead, or Mr John Alford of Cambridge, they show it implicit in their light, fresh, gay verses. More characteristic is Mr E. N. da C. Andrade's Cambridge method :

The sun's out : damn their teaching—
The sun's out : damn all preaching—
We are wise, but we will prove
We are not too wise to love.

It is not a new tune. The difference is that it is more scratchy, more censorious-angry than it used to be. One foresees the Protestant burning the Catholic. Even more devout is Mr Douglas Cole, who addresses a revelling street crowd thus :

Ye who worship your god in the mad drinking bout.

The thing is to get ecstasy, and if only you can worship you will be certain of finding a god. Mr Martin D. Armstrong of Cambridge pictures a man getting ecstasy by cutting down his enemy's trees until, he says :

Lonely on the hill
I knew myself transfigured, and my will,
Responsible to no man, urged me on . . .

The same poet puts it into an aphorism :

Only the fire of love can fuse and burn
This solid world to spirit.

And this knowledge is very wide-spread. The difficulty is to believe it not by the brain alone. In fact the difficulty has probably been insuperable to most of these writers. They may have followed ecstasy like a sinking star, but they know little more of it than quite ordinary poets. Even Mr Rupert Brooke sometimes writes as if he could not enjoy his youth for thinking about it, and so cries "Oh, damn!" at what he is losing on the one hand, and then on the other hand considers the advisability of suicide later on when "love has changed to kindliness." Mrs Cornford has to sharpen the sensation of youth by being rude to her uncles and aunts (or her friends' uncles and aunts), saying—she pretends that "a streak of sunset sky" said it :

Come away, you fools, you fools,
From your scented wine and meat,
Now the elves with splashing feet
Dance among the reedy pools.

Compare with this, Mr A. J. Dawes' method of asserting his youth. He has been refused by a girl he really liked ; his heart is "smashed" ; and he goes off at once to the town :

And all that night I roared and cried
And kissed the woman by my side,
And she was very kind to me
And understood my misery.
And I was full of beer and gin
And deadly drunk and all for sin
To quench the raging flame within.

These are battle-cries, whether of victory or not, I make no pretence of certainty. Even Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch doubts the wisdom of cultivating the lyric so exclusively. But why drag in wisdom at a time when it is hard to tell who are the captains amid the shouting? It is an age of 'forthcoming' democratic style, as Professor Murray says.

Already much smooth *old* humbug has gone. Ten years ago what man, painting an Oxford night, would have so avoided cynicism and idyllicism as the Magdalen man here represented? What Cambridge man would have used a motor-bus, like Mr H. O. Meredith, for any love-scene but a frivolous one? Who would have got so near to making a poem "a moment's monument," not its tomb, as Mr F. Békássy of Cambridge?

Intensely local and intensely personal poetry can go much further yet than, for example, it goes in Mr Wilfred Rowland Childe's "Dream-Cotswold":

. . . 'Mortleone, Bourton and Stow, March, Water, and Wold,
Where none grow weary at all and none grow old,
Where the trees have emerald leaves and the streets are gold. . . .

It is remarkable how much of England even Drayton left untouched by verses. Everything can be made new again by integration in a new place or personality. Mr Charles Bewley of Oxford may have known this only from the brain outward when he wrote "Winter in Ireland," which begins:

In winter twilights
Under the rain
Christ is walking
By moor and plain.

But it seems likely that more will be got from the discovery than Mr Rupert Brooke gets from it in "Grantchester." The important thing is not that a thing should be small, but that it should be intense and capable of unconsciously symbolic significance. The general truth that nothing is small avails little in the making of poetry. The mere clamouring for ecstasy, intensity, and more active style can hardly make more than one or two lyrics. But the clamour may inspire others. It may help men to put themselves in receptive attitudes. A god may be expected at any moment. The tenseness and the tumult of these volumes is an inspiring thing, and, apart from the individual merit of writers like Mrs Cornford and Messrs Flecker, Brooke and Squire, is enough to force any man who feels young to welcome, with Professor Murray, "this realistic and indiscriminating period in poetry."

EDWARD THOMAS

COLLECTED POEMS. By Ford Madox Hueffer. (Max Goschen. 5s. net.)

AT the beginning of his introduction Mr Hueffer makes an indirect appeal to critics which is so pathetic and so acute that no honest man, certainly no man who has enjoyed these poems, could bring himself utterly to disregard it.

"And as for trusting any friend to make a selection, one cannot bring oneself to do it either. They have—one's friends—too many mental axes to grind. One will admire certain verses about a place, because in that place they were once happy; one will find fault with a certain other paper of verses because it does not seem likely to form a piece of prentice work in a school that he is desirous of founding."

Mr Hueffer has foreseen, with devilish penetration, the use which critics, with their mental axes, will make of him: and, so far as he can, he has provided for the danger. And yet this book is clearly destined to provoke dispute: there are in it some eighty or more queer, refreshing, puzzling poems, and beyond that a critical and autobiographical introduction which is more important than any other pronouncement on poetry made in our time.

The author is essentially a modern critic in that he provokes thought rather than precipitates it, and allows the play of his own irrational prejudices to be freely seen. Were a man to-day to attempt a work of such ridiculous scope and title as Eckermann's *Beiträge zur Poesie*, he could hardly do better than make it a commentary on this essay, for Mr Hueffer has touched inconclusively yet magically upon every question that might agitate a student of æsthetics. He speaks of his ability to judge the form of his novels and of his inability to say anything concerning his poems, and so he passes on, leaving the reader vaguely struggling with a distinction between invention and imagination, a distinction that would deserve an essay to itself. Further on, he inquires why the chasm between literary and colloquial speech is broader in England than in France, and why in Germany it does not exist at all; but he only sighs that it should be so, and hurries on with a disconsolate shrug of the shoulders. In this point, however, I think lies the significance of the whole book—as apart from its positive poetic value—for Mr Hueffer does not as a rule write literary verse. He instances German poetry as an example of unliterary work with a curious sense of longing and deprivation: for, after all, if these verses be not *lieder* there are none in England. In any case, there are probably no others. But, in this connection, he does not seem to care how German poetry came to have so precious an heritage. It was not always so, for the Breslau school in the seventeenth century and the writers of *Dämon- und Phyllis-Poesie* in the eighteenth were as literary as Carew and Pope. These writers, however, were not very important, and German literature was practically created by Goethe, who, influenced in his sage youth by folk-song and always pleased rather by the contemplation of things than of ideas, had little temptation to depart from the ordinary ways of speech.

Mr Hueffer, while deploring the impossibility of achieving such sincerity in English, has more than once achieved it; he has had mostly the courage to say what he means without literarifying his language, though he has singularly avoided the modern subjects he pleads for. Even when he writes of Finchley Road, he drifts off quickly, though quite naturally and sincerely, into—

A tiny town
Where all the roads wind up and down
From your little palace—a small, old place. . . .

But what makes his poems lovable is the want of effort in them. He speaks himself of their genesis; first a vague rhythm, then the first line, and afterwards the rest flowing out. They seem to have been composed mentally and sung over for the poet's own pleasure, as, I suppose, "The trees they do grow high" and "High Germany" were first sung in the fields by a countryman at his work. It is encouraging to those who believe that literary poetry is bankrupt and that we must go back behind the Elizabethans, and behind Chaucer even, and take up the thread again where Romance influences cut it off. (In saying this, I do not imply that the folk-song we now know is chronologically anterior to the Romance influences in English; merely that it comes of an older root, and represents a different sort of writing.) I have come perilously near to exhibiting Mr Hueffer as the founder of a new school and for this I ask his forgiveness: I have certainly neglected the letter of his poems for theories based on their general nature.

The songs are the best part of the book, and it is difficult to choose among them. They are certainly songs in the true sense of the word; calling for music. The only fault to be found with them is that nearly all are in the minor key, literally, that is to say a composer would be obliged to set them in the minor. Here is a verse of one that demands such qualification and no other:

Close the book and say good-bye to everything;
Pass up from the shore and pass by byre and stall,
—For the smacks shall sail home on the tail of the tides,
And the kine shall stand deep in the sweet water-sides,
And they still shall go burying, still wedding brides;
But I must be gone in the morning.

Viewed chronologically, the book shows no change in Mr Hueffer, only a progressive individuality and clearness. Two poems in the latest written section, "The Starling," and "In the Little Old Market-place" show more evidence of sustained power than any of the earlier poems except the almost perfect "Suabian Legend." Another long poem in this section, "To all the Dead," is tedious: it gives me an impression of Mr Hueffer writing and writing because he was too tired to stop. But for yet another, "Süssmund's Address to an Unknown God," no praise can be too high and no gratitude extravagant, for in it Mr Hueffer has impartially and eloquently cursed this age and all the earnest and officious persons who would make it unbearable, if they could.

It remains to say that Mr Hueffer has, in spite of his introduction, taken upon himself to select some of his poems for oblivion. This volume does not contain "Every Man," which appeared in *Songs from London*, and I cannot say that I regret it; but I do regret the absence of "Two Making Music," which was published in *From Inland and other Poems*.

E. BUXTON SHANKS

AUGURIES. By Lawrence Binyon. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d. net.)

ODES. By Lawrence Binyon. Revised Edition. (Matthews, 2s. 6d. net.)

THERE is a phrase which recurs many times in this latest volume of Mr Binyon's, and it seems to strike a note for the meditations most properly suggested by his clear and gracious muse: that phrase is—"golden air." Mr Binyon occupies a high place and a sure one, an inheritance due to him through a kind of lineal authenticity apparent from the first, practically undisputed, and which had not to be wrenched in the stress of battle from a horde of hungry claimants. His verse seems to flower in a spacious and shining calm, unfolded gradually in the "golden air" to which it feels itself instinctively akin; and the same precious and aureate silence falls upon all those who will bear him company. These have always been "fit and few," for he is a poet of no facile graces and easy rhythms such as most readily win the popular ear: he does not deal in riot, luxuriance, and thunder, to stir the apathy of an untrained audience. His fine, fastidious passion undergoes always the alchemy of intellect, and is presented pure of dross, rarefied, in a manner cold. Accordingly it is not to be wondered at that he has not yet obtained the widest recognition, for he is lacking in the supreme ecstasy of genius which made Shelley, though at first only a poet's poet, with the passing of years, also a world-poet. His place is rather with Matthew Arnold, Lionel Johnson, Mr Robert Bridges, and Mr William Watson. Austerity, distinction, and a critical as well as a classical spirit qualify him for their company. In fact, as Mr Max Beerbohm once ingenuously admitted of himself—"he has acceded to the hierarchy of good scribes." At the same time he is not content to enjoy the glories of that safe position, but is making continual experiments and advances. There are not lacking in *Auguries* signs that he is endeavouring to give expression to subtleties of thought and feeling beyond the range of his earlier writing, and it is scarcely possible to anticipate how far he may still be able to proceed. In the volumes before us, "The Mirror" is the most striking piece of work: it is full of beautiful lines; but when one is anxious to quote they very properly resent being snatched from their context.

Like a thought of lost delight,
Like love-sweetness, like despair,
Come faint spices of the night
Floating on the darkened air.
The air is tender with the sense of dew,
Is tranced, is dim, is heavy, as if there hung
Within the tinges of its shadowy hue
Ghosts of lost flowers, with all their petals young,
And the young beauty they made incense to.

The creation of atmosphere is a rare and delicate achievement, and one in which Mr Binyon is particularly successful. His sense of form is always masterly: this is no cold, architectural structure, but the verse is the external vehicle of a live and communicative spirit. In "Thunder on the Downs" he approaches a more didactic tone, and his patriotism is voiced with a high eloquence and dignity. Patriotism is a pleasant quality in a poet, but it is strangely apt to prove the death of the poetic spirit and the

vexation of the reader. If it is not a masterpiece in its kind, this poem steers clear of both the principal dangers.

O shores of home,
Since by the vanished watch-fires shields of Rome
Dinted this upland turf, what hearts have ached
To see you far away, what eyes have waked
Ere dawn to watch those cliffs of long desire
One after one rise in their voiceless choir
Out of the twilight over the rough blue
Like music ! . . .

Auguries is a volume which should win Mr Binyon numbers of new readers, but there will also be many who will be glad to have his mature revision of his earlier *Odes*. "The Dryad" is an altogether delightful piece of writing, and constantly captivates by the clear precision of its effects, the freshness and daintiness of the poet's touch, and his subtle choice of phrase.

Staying her hand upon a pliant branch,
She paused, she listened, and then glided on
Half-turned in lovely fear ;
And her young shoulder shone
Like moon-beams that wet sands, foam-bordered, blanch.

The East has always had a particular fascination for him, and his work outside poetry has led him to deal most happily with the art and ideas of the orientals, and this sympathy shows clearly in the ode "Asoka."

Far below
He hears the cool wave fret
On rocky islands ; soft as moths asleep
Come moonlit sails : there on a parapet
Of ruined marble, where the moss gleams wet
And from black cedars a lone peacock cries,
Uncloaking rests Asoka.

Despite their evident beauty of form and thought, one may be permitted to feel that none of these poems yet express all that Mr Binyon should be able to give us. He is too often deliberate, too rarely ecstatic, and while his work cannot justly be accused of verbosity or over-elaboration, one looks sometimes for more evidence of that impassioned ardour which gives to the verse of many poets, greatly his inferiors in craftsmanship and intellectual range, an infectious enthusiasm disarming to the critical spirit.

There is plenty to admire in these books : they are perfectly worthy and polished stones in the monument of Mr Binyon's fame, yet we look with eagerness for the time when he shall be pleased to crown them with a dizzy spire, something that will take our breath entirely away by its inevitable greatness. Meanwhile one is contentedly charmed, and it is a sign of thankless gluttony to rise from such a pleasant banquet clamouring for more and still finer fare.

GRIFFYTH FAIRFAX .

THE SHORTER POEMS OF FREDERICK TENNYSON. Edited with an Introduction by Charles Tennyson. (Macmillan. 5s. net.)

AS one of the faithful few, who have never been ashamed to subscribe themselves admirers of Tennyson, and to treat him "as if he were still the reigning toast of Georgian poetry," I make bold to hail the Messrs Macmillan's new edition of Alfred Tennyson's *Works*, and the *Shorter Poems of Frederick Tennyson*, the laureate's eldest brother. The *Works* are prefaced by a memoir from the pen of the present Lord Tennyson, and the *Shorter Poems* have been admirably introduced, selected, and edited by one of the youngest literary representatives of the melodious family.

To Mr Charles Tennyson's life of Frederick (his uncle ?) we naturally turn with curious interest. Though much has been written of Charles Tennyson Turner and his fine sonnets (three hundred and forty-two in number), very little mention has ever been made of Frederick and his work. For here was a genuine poet overshadowed by one younger brother's fame and by another younger brother's accomplishment. It was perhaps some sense of this that influenced Frederick Tennyson both in his manner of composition and in his method of publication. For during a secluded life of over ninety years he published very little, and at immoderately long intervals, and his poetry bears upon it the stamp of leisurely irresponsibility, as though he had written for his own amusement chiefly and with no thought of an audience.

Yet, as one of the trio of Tennyson brothers, he never entirely belied the family tradition. He had *perforce* to show a marked poetic talent, a talent so marked that we hesitate at times whether not to call it genius. Reading his lyrics, we repeatedly admire their accomplishment, their characteristic Tennysonian vocabulary and turn of phrase, and are as repeatedly nonplussed by their vagueness, their datelessness, their lack of aim or object, their echoing of other poets, and their needless length. It is as though, in view of what Mr Seccombe boldly and truly terms "the deep passion and untamed poetic energy of 'Maud,' 'Locksley Hall,' the 'Morte D'Arthur,' and of the 'finer trances' of 'In Memoriam,' the recluse of Florence and Jersey had murmured '*Cui bono*' even as he wrote.

Frederick Tennyson experienced one phase of life that seldom is given to poets to know. He knew the fulness of old age, like Sophocles, like his own brother Alfred, or Victor Hugo and Goethe. It is, therefore, to his old-age poetry that we turn for a trace of originality. As a young man he lived long in Italy, the close friend of the Brownings, the correspondent of Fitzgerald, and in Siena he married the daughter of the Syndic, while he was still a young man, very arrogant, very argumentative, horribly English, a great cricketer, and latterly a deep Swedenborgian, mystic, and devotee of spirit-rapping. (He fancied he heard electric tickings in his room, which led him only into "trivialities.") How all this brings back that long connection of English genius with Italy—from the days of Shelley and Byron onwards ! His Italian wife died in 1884, and he, in extreme old age, recorded his courtship thus :

It is a golden morning of the spring.
My cheek is pale, and hers is warm with bloom,
And we are left in that old carven room,
And she begins to sing ;

The open casement quivers in the breeze,
And one large musk-rose leans its dewy grace
Into the chamber, like a happy face,
And round it swim the bees ;

She stays her song—I linger idly by—
She lifts her head, and then she casts it down ;
One small, fair hand is o'er the other thrown,
With a low, broken sigh.

I know not what I said—what she replied
Lives, like eternal sunshine, in my heart ;
And then I murmur'd, " Oh ! we never part,
My love, my life, my bride ! "

And then, as if to crown that first of hours—
That hour that ne'er was mated by another—
Into the open casement her young brother
Threw a fresh wreath of flowers !

We might quote him at length, but space forbids. In his more grandiose manner, as in the beautiful "Poem to a Caged Nightingale," we are reminded of Shelley. And we even seem to hear an echo of Shakespeare's lyrics now and then, as in the lovely verses to a "Summer Fly" ; but quotation would be endless, and we do best to limit ourselves here to two verses from his "Songs of an Old Man," leaving our readers to read his choice memorial book for themselves.

The day is blithe, and bright, and fair,
The loving light is brooding soft
Over the earth, and many and oft
The champaign odours borne aloft
Come down upon me with wild wings,
And the melodious Summer sings
Up in the crystal air.

Give me a cup of golden wine
To drink unto the new-born year.
It is the nightingale I hear
Down in the lemon thicket near ;
And I will sing another song,
Nature, to thee ; while I am strong
My voice shall mix with thine.

V. G. P.

APHRODITE, AND OTHER POEMS. By John Helston. (Methuen. 5s. net.)

SINGLE poems by John Helston have appeared in POETRY AND DRAMA and other periodicals for some time past. The publication of this volume reminds us that we have known or had the chance of knowing its author for the best part of a year, and should now be coming to some conclusion as to how much he means to us. The journalists, led by the Smartest Editor in the World, have been mainly excited by the fact that Mr Helston was formerly not a man of letters by profession, but used to be engaged in what all would agree to call work. Whether they insisted on this irrelevant fact in order to suggest false analogies to those of their readers who have read Bloomfield or heard of Clare, or because they share the common opinion that it is very clever and interesting to leave off being one thing and begin to be another, it would be idle to inquire. But it is certainly to be regretted that the judgment of the public should have been prejudiced, for or against the author, by a piece of gossip which cannot possibly have any bearing on the poetical quality of his work. The poems themselves tell us at a glance something far more pertinent : they show us a writer who, whether he can claim to belong to them by right of genius or no, is attracted by his sympathies and aspirations to the most poetical group of our poets—Spenser, Keats, Shelley.

It is true that crudities of various kinds are abundant in his verses. Some must have been written when he had just discovered the charm of alliteration, and not realised that it may be a nuisance. Thus in one paragraph he writes : " Thrushes, flute-throated, shook the shades with song," and paraphrases " grass " as " the green, grateful guerdon of the sward "—gratuitously predisposing the reader against two lines, following these at a hazardously short distance, which are better in themselves and more congruous with the surrounding images :

That all things seem to swoon
Down the large luxury of languor's dreams.

Again, had he kept back his poems unto the ninth year he might not have left " madly great . . . gladly wise . . . wisely glad . . . greatly good . . . darkly bright " calling attention to each other in such near neighbourhood. These are derivative, and perhaps youthful faults ; and indeed we need not look far to discover strikingly unoriginal passages :

For thee no more shall winter melt in spring. . . .
For thee no shroud shall autumn evenings bring,
When earthly summer dies.

Such lines may be dismissed with a smile ; but when Mr Helston writes—

Farewell ! Thou art beyond all joy and sorrow,

the reader supplies many more exclamation marks at the end of the line. Inexperience may be accountable for some undue expansions. A phrase, for instance, would have been enough to indicate the fancy—now a literary commonplace—that two lovers have known and loved each other in ages long past, unless it had been treated in a new way. But Mr Helston probably does not remember the eighteen-nineties : he treats the subject in fifteen lines, and in the old way. This is discouraging : so is it to

find him writing that the stars of earth are "done," meaning that they have passed away : so is it to read :

Thuswise

She sang ; and for the manner how she sang,
I think the wind sang like it to the sea—

the offensive word beginning the quotation being used to prolong an overworked rhyme, already jaded by the admission of " thrice " and " artifice." But it is lamentable to find, violently and inconsequently breaking into the text of his best work, some mean and peevish lines, conceived in an ungracious and impotent mood, ridiculing the Judæo-Christian mythology. Here the author is exactly on the level of the rationalistic (!) lecturer in Battersea Park, who challenges his critics to pray for " a leg o' mutton and a bottle o' beer " and see what they get. Mr Helston should realise that he has blasphemed far worse against poetry than against the creed he dislikes.

Passages like these could the better have been spared, since in many poems Mr Helston expresses sincerely and directly his opposition to official religion. Here it is that he most frequently invokes the name of Shelley, though it is questionable whether he fully understands Shelley or would accept all his teaching. It is certainly startling to observe that he seems to regard Swinburne as of equal importance with Shelley as a teacher and vindicator of freedom. He is Shelley's disciple in iconoclasm, but seems not to have thought much about his ideal philosophy. Heavenly love and intellectual beauty are no doubt acknowledged among our author's gods ; but his daily worship is at the shrine of the Pandemian Aphrodite. She is the subject of his four longer poems, and in only one of these does he persuade us that she is divine. " Aphrodite at Leatherhead " has a convincing, passionate tone which is lacking in the others. It has also some felicitous nature-imagery, wherefrom we may quote that of the lark :

Whose cloud of song

Is all of cloud 'twixt us and deep blue heaven.

In this poem, too, the author succeeds in showing lust as a part of love—a dogma which he is at great pains to proclaim in other places—while in " The Thornbrake " and the first of the " Conversations " we feel, for all his protestations, that the larger passion is less well understood than the narrower. Moreover, " Aphrodite " is in rhyme, and Mr Helston is not at his best in blank verse. He is at all times inclined to be difficult, but here especially the difficulties are often merely grammatical. He has little rhythmical distinction, and such liberties as the addition of a sixth foot seem invariably to be taken to suit the writer's convenience, not for the sake of the phrasing or melody. Mr Helston is not an innovator : he is certainly not an original genius ; but he has faith, he loves his art, and his workmanship generally deserves respect.

A. MARTIN FREEMAN

POEMS. By Willoughby Weaving. (Elkin Mathews. 2s. 6d net.)

THERE is no doubt that Mr Weaving is a poet, though the greater part of his poetry is still immature. Were it the sole business of a critic to pass judgment on a book as a final work, standing or falling by its absolute intrinsic value, he would in this case probably extract three or four pieces for special commendation, notice a certain wealth of imagery in a number of the remainder, and affix his signature. But this were vastly unfair to the author, whom I understand to have only lately left Oxford. (If this is so it is difficult to understand his omission from the *Book of Oxford Poetry*, 1910-13, just published.) His qualities are the natural qualities of a lyrical poet; imagination—rich imagination—a feeling (though still undeveloped) for the value of words, and quick sympathy with nature not only as a beautiful world of which he is the witness, but as something deep-seated in the heart of man and in which, again, the heart of man is enclosed. The first poem in his book is sufficient to mark him for the attention of the keen “watchers of the skies.”

MY BURIAL

Let me in the warm earth lie
When spring is breaking
And feel the tender roots entwine
With feelers soft that probe and try
Me unawaking;
And, since my body gave no sign,
Weave round me a close fabric fine,
Folding with life my drear decay,
And surely taking
In little parts my crumbling flesh
Upon their way
Into the day,
Winning me room in the sweet air,
Through all their leaves and blossoms fresh
To flourish there.
So may I live and love the sun,
Even when my human days are done.

I should imagine this poem to be one of the most lately written, it is certainly one of the best, in the book; and for the following reason: that Mr Weaving has found a vocabulary absolutely free from any derived “poetics” in the shape of archaic verbiage, and a form as spontaneous as the growth of which he writes. That is already a sign of maturity. Much of his work, on the other hand, is injured, and many of his images are blurred by the use of an outworn phraseology, and by an uncertainty of diction which shackles the natural freedom of his emotion. For those who trouble to inquire beyond this gaucheness there is a mind quick in perception and concise in thought, the qualities which neither care nor experience can acquire. In the meantime, there is sufficient achievement to be a pledge for much promise in, amongst others, “My Will,” “Hope of Pleasure,” “Sharan’s Dream,” “Over the Water,” and the sonnet on page 57.

J. A.

JESUS OF NAZARETH : A POETICAL DRAMA IN SEVEN SCENES. By Alexandra von Herder. (Heinemann. 5s. net.)

THIS was a daring experiment of Miss von Herder's. Everything was against her. The gospel stories simply *can't* be rewritten. The events occurring all about the personality of Jesus have sometimes been, and indeed are here, successfully manipulated so as to throw up a central vision of the personality of the prophet—but only in some dim, impersonal manner. In Miss von Herder's dramatic poem, however, Jesus is not merely made to speak, but he is the chief speaker. Thus many words are put into his mouth the sentiments of which we do not find at all compatible with our conception of him as gathered from its one and only possible source, the Gospels. And there are expansions of the gospel narratives, and amplifications, which do not seem to us to add to them either interest or beauty. Thus, when Pilate asks, "What is truth?" here is the answer of Jesus :

Truth? How can I tell thee?
The spirit only can encompass its full measure,
The Eternal only bear its weight.
On lips of mortal men it speaks not,
Lives not in the pages of their books,
But lift the stone and thou wilt find it,
Cleave the wood and it is there.
In the glory of the sunlight,
In the anger of the storm,
In the strength of thine endeavour,
In the yearnings of thy heart,
The broken rays dwell of its splendour,
The secret whispers of its voice.

If we refer to the Gospel of St. John, we find only this :

Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*.

Or in St. Mark we find this one strong and lovely verse :

But Jesus yet answered nothing ; so that Pilate marvelled.

and we cannot but feel that the beauty of the narrative is rather dissipated than enhanced by the invention of such speeches for Jesus.

Nevertheless, Miss von Herder, having freely taken upon herself the risk and responsibility of an entire reconstruction, it behoves us rather to consider her long dramatic poem as a new and original work than anything in the nature of a paraphrase ; and, as such, we certainly find it of considerable interest and liveliness. The rhythm of her verse is entirely free ; its movement is very rapid. Her management of the more crowded scenes is good ; their internal sequence is qualified by a rare inevitability, and we find ourselves able to visualise them without effort. In short, we may say that we admire her rather as a vigorous dramatic poet than as a chronicler of the martyrdom of Jesus of Nazareth.

H. M.

THE TEMPER. By William Carlos Williams. (Elkin Mathews. 1s. net.)

READERS of *The Poetry Review* (1912) will remember that some of these poems appeared in the October (American) number preceded by the Introductory Note of Mr Ezra Pound which opened with the following words : "God forbid that I should introduce Mr Williams as a cosmic force," and which contained, among others, the following "choice" (as Mr Darrell Figgis might call them) phrases :

Mr Williams may write some very good poetry. It is not every one of whom one can say that.

Mr Williams has eschewed many of the current American vices ; I therefore respect him.

He has not sold his soul to editors. He has not complied with their niminy-piminy restrictions.

He apparently means what he says. . . . His cadence is, to my sense, genuine, and his verse is sound as a bell—at least in places.

But above all these he has one virtue pre-eminent : he has not the magazine touch.

Such, in best Anglo-American phrases, was Mr Pound's opinion of his countryman across the water. Now, a year later, Mr Williams publishes a tiny volume of 32 pages. What has he been doing ? The poem on page 32 is called "To wish myself Courage."

I will sing then the song, long in the making—
When the stress of youth is put away from me.

How can I ever be written out as men say ?
Surely it is merely an interference with the long song—
This that I am now doing.

I also wish him courage, but he'd better not wait too long. His qualities are those of a good *Imagiste*—reticence, even to stinginess, arrogance, testiness, impassioned superficiality : he is all that Mr Pound could desire in the way of a light and charming mocker. There is no doubt, however, that he takes himself very seriously, and not without reason. Behind the external gaiety of his impressionism we are sensible of power and understanding.

This kind of thing is ridiculous, and he should know that it is :—

MEZZO FORTE

Take that, damn you ; and that !
And here's a rose
To make it right again !
God knows
I'm sorry, Grace ; but then,
It's not my fault if you will be a cat.

But here is a joke of a much better kind :

HIC JACET

The coroner's merry little children
Have such twinkling brown eyes.
Their father is not of gay men
And their mother jocular in no wise,
Yet the coroner's merry little children
Laugh so easily.
They laugh because they prosper.
Fruit for them is upon all branches.
Lo ! how they jibe at loss, for
Kind Heaven fills their little paunches !
It's the coroner's merry, merry children
Who laugh so easily.

I should like also to draw particular attention to "Crude Lament," "The Fool's Song," and "Song from 'The Birth of Venus'": the two latter appeared last year in the number of *The Poetry Review* referred to above, and that periodical may well be proud of having first published them.

HAROLD MONRO

POEMS. By Michael Heseltine. (Mathews. 1s. net.)

MR HESELTINE'S book consists of some twenty little word-paintings. They are too slight to be remembered long after one has laid the book down, but their incisiveness and economy make them vivid while they are before the eye. They are not merely sketches of external form, but of character as well, with a frequent but unexaggerated colour of irony.

OXFORD : LECTURE

Languidly, seeing this single hour remains
To round the morning, and some little care
For provident expenditure of pains
When Maytime laughter flies on High Street air,
A scantier stream shoulders the heavy door
And hates the twilight coolness of the hall,
Even at midday over-dark to explore
How the grave famous faces from the wall
Preach for Success 'gainst Youth : two leering scholars
Choke down a libel as the lecturer passes ;
He critically surveys drab slippers, collars
He fain would moralise, fingers his glasses,
Then clears his throat, the solemn—"We were speaking—"
Hailed with late-comers' whispers and boots squeaking.

The irony is sharper elsewhere ; hardly one of the poems is dull, and hardly one lacks some intimation of a delight in sensuous beauty. We do not feel that Mr Heseltine is a new poet trying his powers, but rather that he has a certain definite if limited gift which he knows how to exercise.

J. A.

BREAD AND CIRCUSES. By Helen Parry Eden. (Lane, 3s. 6d. net.)

TO BETSEY-JANE ON HER DESIRING TO GO
INCONTINENTLY TO HEAVEN

MY Betsey-Jane, it would not do,
For what would Heaven make of you,
A little honey-loving bear,
Among the Blessèd Babies there ?

Nor do you dwell with us in vain
Who tumble and get up again
And try, with bruised knees, to smile—
Sweet, you are blessèd all the while.

And we in you ; so wait ; they'll come
To take your hand and fetch you home,
In heavenly leaves to play at tents
With all the Holy Innocents.

It would perhaps have been better had Mrs Eden published two books, or at least omitted some part from the present one. It is less a question of skill than of purpose. Having read with delight the above poem (not the best, but the most quotable), it is somewhat disconcerting to be faced, four pages further on, with some lines to "A Lady of Fashion on the Death of her Dog," beginning thus :

I am not lightly moved ; my grief was dumb
At great-aunt Cohen's death, nor did I whine
When Uncle Monty did at last succumb
Aged close on sixty-nine.

This is evidently one of the seventeen poems from *Punch* which the author acknowledges in her prefatory note, and at its conclusion one feels inclined to turn back to be sure there was something more than humorous in the earlier number. The whole book would divide fairly easily into three parts—serious, light, and humorous—and we would gladly exchange the first and last for a double portion of the middle. We should thereby retain the whole series of delightful poems concerning a delightful person named Betsey-Jane, who plays, sleeps, weeps and laughs in these pages with a charm all her own and Mrs Eden's. We should like to quote five or six poems about this small lady, but are faced with the impossible problem of presenting her in half a page when some eighty have been necessary to her biographer. And we refuse to reproduce only a part portrait when the whole is accessible.

Mrs Eden writes with perfect ease. She is rarely at a loss for the right word, yet the word is never so ostentatiously right as to obtrude itself on the mind. It is there simply because it has a use in the picturing of Betsey-Jane. Our only fear is that Betsey-Jane may find so many admirers that she will have her small head turned !

J. A.

POEMS. By R. C. Phillimore, with an Introduction by John Masefield. (Sidgwick & Jackson. 2s. 6d. net.)

SOME recent disappointments have inclined us to look with suspicion on new poets whose work is bolstered up by laudatory introductions, but I do not think that many people will quarrel with Mr Masefield's opening remark about this little book. He points out that Mr Phillimore's poems have "a quality that is as rare in literature as in other things—the quality of personality, or individual point of view." In most of the pieces, even in those which are anything but successful, the writer's own voice is heard, and, at a time when half our poets are echoing the other half, this is a considerable virtue.

Mr Phillimore is no great technician, and his craftsmanship is uneven. Sometimes, as though by accident, he strikes a new and happy lilt, as in the first verse of the poem called "A Confession," but at other times he is not so happy. Occasionally in the book what we may call the "new spirit" is traceable, with rather unpleasing results, for it does not seem quite in tune with Mr Phillimore's temperament. In a poem called "The City Dust-heaps" the two strains are to be observed, and they do not mingle. This piece is further weakened by the following platitudinous statement which, though popular, happens to be quite untrue :

London is a dull grey place,
In winter especially :
Seldom you see a happy face
Anywhere about the place.

And later in the same stanza, if the voice is the voice of Mr Phillimore, the vocabulary is surely another's !

Oh ! it's only the girls from the dust-heaps,
Where it is squashy underfoot
With cabbages, where broken shards
Stink as they litter up the yards,
Where old love-letters and business-cards,
And waste of morals and art and mind,
Compete together in the wind
To make a hell of a special kind.

Poets, however, almost more than any other kind of artist, deserve to be judged by their best work, and in such pieces as the "Confession," already referred to, in some of the Romany Poems, and in the fine verses beginning, "Would you go out into the void place of death ?" Mr Phillimore shows that he has it in him to achieve much.

D. G.

CARDUCCI. A SELECTION OF HIS POEMS. With Verse Translations, Notes, and Three Introductory Essays. By G. L. Bickersteth. (Longmans, Green & Co. 10s. 6d. net.)

THOUGH Carducci has now been dead for several years, the greater bulk of his poetry has remained a sealed book to all but those few who know and appreciate Italian poetry. Mr Bickersteth is a careful and judicious translator, though, in his attempt to do the original full justice, he forgets sometimes the intrinsic nature of English poetry. In certain poems like "The Parliament," and others from the *Odi Barbare*, his experiments in classic metres are not always successful and cannot be considered except as mere literal translations. "By the Urn of Percy Bysshe Shelley," and "Crossing the Tuscan Maremma," are some of his happiest efforts. The latter, which we quote, affords a good example of the value and the sincerity of his work :

Sweet country, whose wild loveliness sank deep
Into my being, inspired my proud free song,
Gave me a heart, where hate and love ne'er sleep,
One glimpse of thee—again my pulse beats strong.

The hills, that still their wonted outline keep,
I recognise again ; the dreams, that long
Ago I dreamed, bid me half smile, half weep ;
And youth's enchanted visions about me throng.

Ah, all I dreamed and all I loved was vain !
Run as I might, I never reached the goal :
And I shall fall to-morrow ; yet once again

The clouds that o'er thy distant hill-tops roll,
Thy fields that glisten through the morning rain,
Whisper of peace unto my storm-tossed soul.

The three introductions which precede the translations are well and carefully done, and sum up, in an admirable manner, Carducci's place in modern Italian literature. Space forbids us to discuss them at length, as we would wish, but we hope to do so in the next *Italian Chronicle*.
A. D. R.

A BOOK OF CHILDREN'S VERSE. Arranged by Mabel and Lilian Quiller-Couch. Illustrated in colour by M. Etheldreda Gray. (Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d. net.)

IT is extremely difficult to compile a children's anthology. We had every reason to hope that this book, selected by members of a family which is of the high aristocracy among anthologists, might have proved to be something quite uncommonly excellent. We are disappointed. Is it our fault ? Or is it the fault of the anthologists ? We have tested the book on two or three children without particularly satisfactory results. The whole matter is very subtle ; we admit ourselves unable to analyse it. Most of the better children's poems are included : perhaps too many obviously mediocre ones are

interspersed ; perhaps it is a question of format, and production. Many factors may combine to cause us our irritating sensation of disappointment ; we think, however, that the illustrations make the strongest factor. These certainly do not please any of the children to whom we have shown them ; they have not even the compensating quality (as have some children's illustrations) of providing entertainment for grown-ups. Let us not fail to remark that the *Book of Children's Verse* is quite distinctly better than the *average* children's Christmas or birthday gift-book—considering it is selected from the whole of English poetry, this could not well be otherwise. Such praise is very faint ; but it is the best we can bestow.

H. M.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.

Edited by L. E. Kastner, M.A. (Manchester University Press. Two vols. 21s. net.)

HERE indeed is a wonderful and beautiful book ! I hold my breath and bow my head before its two massive volumes, amounting to some 850 pages, of which no less than 185 are devoted to *Notes* on the text, its "22 fac-simile Reproductions of Original Title-pages and 7 Portraits of the Author, all reproduced in Collotype, many of them for the first time" ; I marvel, as all reviewers may, at the miracle of enterprise that has wrought it, and I brood sombrely, as most philosophers must, to what end it is wrought. But, as a booklover, my heart beats in sympathy with the delight of such, wherever they may be, who can welcome this edition as the final one of a favourite poet. I contemplate with much less surprise a final edition at this date of William Drummond of Hawthornden than one of Pope or Crabbe. We return to the Jacobeans, and to some Elizabethans, as to a clear and delightful fountain ; the style of some of the younger English poets of to-day is, for good or for bad, under their direct influence : I can even imagine that the demand for this immense edition may be almost proportionate to Mr Kastner's labour in compiling it. For the student of literature, the particular interest of William Drummond is based on his marked susceptibility to the influence of Italian poetry. In his case, "it is so remarkable," writes Mr Kastner, "that it would be impossible, as far as we know, to quote a parallel in the whole of English literature. Not only is the number of poems conveyed by him directly from Italy extraordinary in itself, but he is impregnated to such an extent with Italian sentiments and Petrarchan conceits, that there is hardly an idea or simile, in his sonnets particularly, that could not be matched in Petrarch, or in his Italian or foreign disciples." Thus in the whole period of Italian influence he may be studied as one, at any rate, of its closest and most brilliant representatives. If I began to write more than this about him, were I to discuss his poetry in detail with quotation, I should find myself involved in a longer article than would be compatible with the scope and aims of POETRY AND DRAMA. I will but offer, therefore, the assurance to those who may require it that this edition is indeed the perfect one in its kind of their *Damon* "that sings such handsome things"

. . . A Man by Heaven inspir'd,
At Home ador'd, by Foreigners admired.

HAROLD MONRO

A LIST OF RECENT BOOKS [ANNOTATED]

ENGLISH POETRY

A Ballad of Woman, and Other New Poems. By W. E. B. Henderson. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d. net.)

A Holiday in Verse. By R. S. Darbishire. (Mathews. 1s. 6d. net.)

Aphrodite, and Other Poems. By John Helston. (Heinemann. 5s. net.)

[Reviewed on p. 498.]

Atlantis, and Other Poems. By Julius West. (Nutt. 2s. net.)

[An idle tune my fingers strum,
But none can say 'tis overlong,
A single burden bears the song,—
I know the best is yet to come.]

Auguries. By Laurence Binyon. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d. net.)

[Reviewed on p. 494.]

A Vision of Reconciliation, and Other Verses. By E. M. Gray. (Methuen. 2s. 6d. net.)

Ballads of the Veld-Land. By Lynn Lyster. (Longmans. 5s. net; School edition, 1s. 9d. net.)

[There are many tales of heroism in the martial history of South Africa. These have supplied the subject-matter for Mr Lyster's book. Some people may find the rhythm of the verses stimulating. Personally we rather prefer to read the plain prose version which prefaces each poem.]

Belisarius, General of the East. By John Presland. (Chatto. 5s. net.)

[This is the fifth poetic drama of "John Presland," and it shows such qualities as seem to be at his command, in the fullest development. The verse is flawlessly managed, the characters carefully drawn, the story excellently dramatised. And yet, throughout, one feels but a faint interest in the reading. Poetic drama is perhaps the most hazardous of all literary ventures and requires the greatest amount of genius to achieve success. And it must be frankly admitted that of genius "John Presland" falls some way short. The play reads like a commissioned piece of work, and we feel no doubt that such it is, only it has been commissioned by the author. We do not feel that Mr Presland will ever write anything more than a readable play. He has too much accomplishment and too little fire.]

Bread and Circuses: Poems. By Helen Parry Eden. (Lane. 3s. 6d. net.)

[Reviewed on p. 504.]

By Siloa's Brook. By W. Trego Webb. (Headley. 1s. net.)

Celtic Memories, and Other Poems. By N. J. O'Connor. (Mathews. 1s. net.)

Columbine: a Fantasy, and Other Verses. By R. Arkell. (Sidgwick & Jackson. 1s. net.)

Cor Cordium. By Alfred Williams. (Macdonald. 3s. 6d. net.)

[This publisher indiscriminately withholds review copies for blind commercial reasons.]

Fishing Rhymes. By G. L. A. Dodd. (Mathews. 2s. net; 1s. sewed.)

Flemish Tales. By J. Redwood-Anderson. (George Allen. 3s. 6d. net.)

[Without being in any degree fine poetry, these five tales have a directness of manner and a sincerity of utterance which make them pleasant enough reading. The psychology is not very deep, and on critical examination might be found none too convincing in places; but the author has relied for effect chiefly on a fine bleak atmosphere excellently in keeping with the character of his tales. The picture in "Andreas van Tilt" of the man lashed to

the arms of a windmill is particularly graphic ; but here, as in each of the other poems, we feel that the author has just failed to engineer an effective "curtain" for his scene.

Foliage : Various Poems. By William H. Davies. (Mathews. 1s. 6d. net.)

[Reviewed under *Current English Poetry*, p. 459.]

From Dewy Youth to Snowy Age. By Edith Horsfall. (Walter Scott Publishing Co. 2s. 6d. net.)

Helen's Mirror. By Elizabeth Westermair. (Mathews. 1s. net.)

[Very slight verses, but not unpleasant.]

Hope, and Other Verses. By J. Roberts. (Mowbray. 1s. 6d. net.)

In Arcady, and Other Poems. By W. J. Cameron. (Erskine Macdonald. 3s. 6d. net.)

[Perfectly correct and perfectly lifeless. The following verse is a masterpiece of ingenuity ; no matter in what order the lines are taken, they make sense, and moreover the same sense.

In sunny Piccadilly,
When folks are out of town,
I like to go with Willie,
Walking up and down,
Before the leaves turn brown.

This suggests an idea for a pleasant drawing-room competition among poetasters and others during the long winter evenings.]

Ireland's Veils, and Other Poems. By Ethel Rolt-Wheeler. (Mathews. 1s. net.)

[There is a delicate charm about some of these pieces. They are very slight, and noteworthy more for their musical artistry than for any depth of feeling.]

Love—and Other Things : a Little Book of Verses. By A. B. K. W. (Heffer. 1s. 6d. net.)

[Sentimental rubbish of the worst order.]

Love Triumphant, and Other Poems. By R. Gorell Barnes. (Longmans. 3s. 6d. net.)

Lyrics and Dramas. By Stephen Phillips. (Lane. 4s. 6d. net.)

[Held over for quotation. Vide *Varia*, p. 391.]

My Wreath of Blue, and Other Poems. By Lucia Willis-Fleming. (Blackwell. 2s. 6d. net.)

Magenta Minutes. By Sandys Wason. (Goschen. 2s. 6d. net.)

[This book of nonsense rhymes comes as a surprise after *Simon Dean*. We prefer Mr Wason in serious mood. A lot of this present book is not only nonsensical, but silly (e.g. such phrases as "The Omelette of the Past"). Some of it, on the other hand, is really amusing. The secret of such writings is not to get as far away from sense as possible, but as near. Mr Wason is most successful in his Limericks, as witness the following :

[There once was the breast of a bird
Which was said to be Richard the third ;
But when offered on toast
The guests and the host
Considered the theory absurd.]

Moods and Metres : New Lyric Poems. By Charles Newton-Robinson. (Constable. 5s. net.)

[We cannot admire these poems, but we will respect the dead. They are preceded by the usual Introduction describing Mr Newton-Robinson as a Land-reformer, Yachtsman, Fencer, etc.]

Odd Numbers. By Dum-Dum. (Constable. 3s. 6d. net.)

[A collection of verses by the well-known contributor to *Punch*.]

- Odes, and Other Poems.* By L. E. Smith. (Methuen. 3s. 6d. net.)
- Old Testament Rhymes.* By Robert Hugh Benson. Illustrated by Gabriel Pippet. (Longmans : 2s. net ; sewed, 1s. net.)
- On the Face of a Star.* By James A. Mackereth. (Longmans. 2s. 6d. net.)
 [Mr Mackereth's name is not unknown to us, and on referring to the advertisement at the end of this present book we note he has received his share of adulation. If we find fault with him, we feel bound to offer some good reason. His work is technically excellent in what it attempts ; it contains no innovations, but, whatever the form employed, it is employed well. Nevertheless, the total effect on the reader is one of irritation ; we feel that, however sincere the author may be in his theme, he is not sincere in his poetry ; his attitude is pretentious, his style derivative, and not from one but from a number of sources. There is an ode in the style of Keats ; blank verse of a kind which is the stock-in-trade of many skilful poetasters ; a poem in Irish dialect, and another which we take to be Scotch. His passion is *for* poetry, and not the passion *of* poetry. That he finds many admirers, however, is proved by the advertisement of which we have spoken.]
- Pantoia : Poems.* By H. S. Vere Hodge. (Goschen. 2s. 6d. net.)
- Peakland, and Other Poems.* By Robert Eccles. (Sherratt & Hughes. 2s. 6d. net.)
- Poems and Translations.* By George Edward Dartnell. (Simpkin. 1s. net.)
- Poems.* By Horace Ward Chandler. (Walter Scott Publishing Co. 2s. 6d. net..)
- Poems.* By Michael Heseltine. (Mathews. 1s. net.)
 [Reviewed on p. 503.]
- Poems, Old and New.* By J. Morison. (Hodder & Stoughton. 5s. net.)
- Poems.* By R. C. Phillimore. Introduction by John Masefield. (Sidgwick & Jackson. 2s. 6d. net.)
 [Reviewed on p. 505.]
- Poems.* By D. H. S. Nicholson. (Methuen. 2s. 6d. net.)
 [The qualities of Mr Nicholson's verse are purely negative. He does not startle one ; he does not irritate one ; he does not thrill one ; he does not even quite succeed in boring one. His metres are perfectly finished to a fault. His point of view is partly pagan, principally Christian. While being devoid of very new images, he abstains from too obvious *cliché*. While—etc.]
- Songs and Sonnets.* By Charles Cammell. (Humphreys. 3s. 6d. net.)
- Songs from Books.* By Rudyard Kipling. (Macmillan. 6s. net. Pocket Edition, 4s. 6d. net ; leather, 5s. net. *Works, Edition de Luxe.* vol. xxvii. 10s. 6d. net.)
 [Reviewed under *Current English Poetry*, p. 459.]
- Songs of Changing Skies.* By John Presland. (Chatto & Windus. 3s. 6d. net.)
 [It is a pity that Mr Presland should ever have read Browning. We feel sure that he has ideas and feelings of his own. But his mind is so saturated with, and his admiration so profound for the great master that he has lost his own individuality. Much of what we have written about *Belisarius*, elsewhere in this book-list, applies also to these *Songs*.]
- Songs to Sylvia.* By T. Henry Walwyn Trumper. (Gay & Hancock. 1s. 6d. net.)
 [A cycle of poems modelled on "Maud." There is no dramatic power in the work as a whole.]
- Sonnets.* By H. R. King. (Macdonald. 2s. net.)
- Spring Songs : Lyrics and Sonnets.* By E. C. Whitcombe. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d. net.)
- The Daffodil Fields.* By John Masefield. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d. net.)
 [Reviewed under *Current English Poetry*, p. 459.]

The Knave of Hearts, 1894-1908: Poems. By Arthur Symons. (Heinemann. 5s. net.)

[Reviewed under *Current English Poetry*, p. 459.]

The Lays of the Pharisee. By W. E. C. With 46 full-page illustrations by Zoffany Oldfield. (London: Mulvy Ouseley & Son, 9 John St., Adelphi, W.C. 2s. 6d. net.)

[This volume provides so much entertainment for the modest sum of 2s. 6d. that we almost feel inclined to recommend some of our less serious readers to spend that amount on it if they feel inclined to waste some money; not so much for the verses—

When human hands can rubber buy,
And feet are amputated
As punishment to heathens who
Their rubber bring belated—

but for the 46 illustrations. It is quite possible that such productions may be of value as data for psychological analysis.]

The Master: a Poetical Play in Two Acts. By W. G. Hole. Introduction by Stephen Phillips. (Macdonald. 2s. 6d. net.)

[Held over for quotation. Vide *Vaira*, p. 391.]

The Modern Poet, and Other Verses. By W. H. Harwood. (Constable. 3s. 6d. net.)

The Moxford Book of English Verse, 1340-1913. By A. Stodart-Walker. (Nash. 3s. 6d. net.)

The Over-lander, and Other Verses. By Will Ogilvie. (Fraser, Asher. 3s. net.)

[Mr. Ogilvie writes simple, straight-forward, unsubtle, broad-chested verses, and we confess to a hankering for a taste of colonial fresh-air after reading them.]

The Priestess of Ida, and Other Poems. By William Shepperley. (Jones & Evans. 1s. net.)

[Held over for quotation. Vide *Varia*, p. 391. Mr Shepperley being a pedlar, many notices of him have appeared in the daily press, but we have not seen any notices of his poetry.]

The Soul of a Doll, and Other Poems. By K. C. Spiers. (Chapman. 2s. 6d. net.)

The Soul of Scotland, and Some Lyrics. By William Douglas. (Chapman. 3s. 6d. net.)

The Web of Life. By Morgan Douglas. (W. J. Hay. 1s. 6d. net.)

[The author is fond of refrains, such as "Britannia, my Queen! Britannia, my Mother!" "O spring! O joyous spring!", "O Heart! O bleeding Heart!", "Coraggio!". He does not perhaps know that his title was used a few years ago by Mr W. W. Gibson for one of his best volumes.]

Those Early Years, and Other Poems. By Berwen Breeth. (Livingstone. 2s. net.)

[We are somewhat mystified by this book. The title poem is a narrative of the childhood of Christ. The others are also narratives, part humorous, part religious. Perhaps irony is the objective. A glossary is appended, containing, amongst others, the following jokes:—Eupathic Ear—one that refuses scandal; Re-vamped—Patching upper part of boot. Concertina—A musical instrument played by expanding and closing in.]

To-morrow's Road: A Booklet of Verses. By G. M. H. (Privately printed. 6d. net.)

[These verses have a superficial appearance of vigour, but they deal so consistently with generalisations such as Life, Hope, Fear, and draw so largely from the dictionary of religious cliché that they fail to convince.]

Wafts from the Briny: Poems. By James McCurdy. (J. Brown. 2s. 6d. net.)

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[Reviewed under *Current English Poetry*, p. 459.]
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[Reviewed on p. 494.]
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[Mr Barlow has, we understand, some reputation. Thus, among the 11 pages of extracts from notices, we find the *Westminster Review* reporting of him that he "manifests a power sufficient to place him in the same rank with Tennyson, Swinburne, and Matthew Arnold, though the *Spectator* can only claim that "Mr Barlow is a sad singer; but he is amongst those who sing." Moreover, his "Complete Works" have now reached their ninth volume. If our attitude is hostile in such matters, it is because we consider the propagation and extensive circulation of bad verse an error which it is essential we should combat to the best of our power.]

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[Reviewed on p. 496.]

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 [Reviewed on p. 489.]
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 [Reviewed on p. 489.]
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 [Reviewed on p. 506.]
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[Held over for review.]
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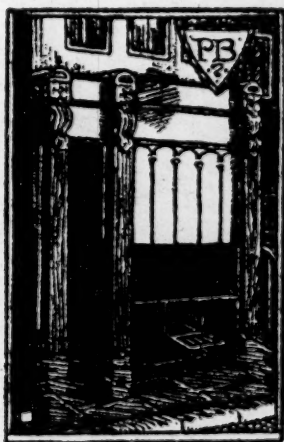
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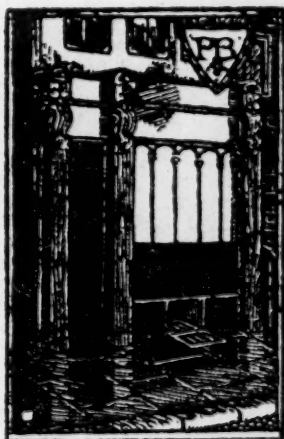
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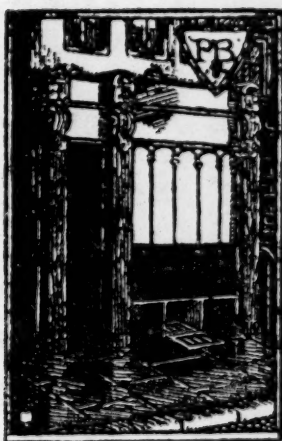
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